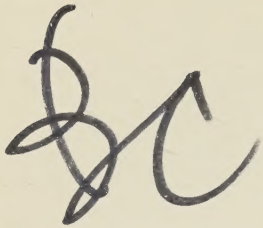
SONGS OF SUN AND SHADOW

JULIAN JOHNSTONE



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Songs of sun and shadow

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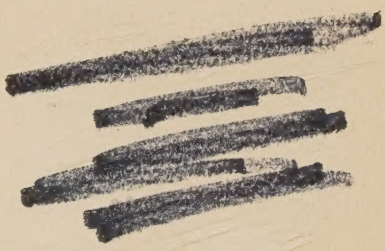
By

JULIAN E. JOHNSTONE



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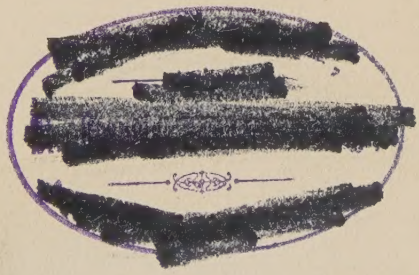

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TO MOTHER

The roses of summer have left your cheeks,
  And the sunlight of summer your eyes;
But the rose in your heart will never depart,
  Nor the light in your soul that lies.

Whatever of music, mother, I have,
  And whatever of beauty is mine,
I got it of thee, as I sat at thy knee:
  The music and magic are thine!

These songs of my singing, though poor they be,
  And light as the summery breeze,
I lay at thy feet; and, mother, my sweet,
  I know that the tribute will please!

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LIFE AND DEATH

[Written for His Grace, Archbishop Williams' golden jubilee]

Out of the regions of eternal splendor,
A spirit garmented and winged with light,
The self-existent One, the Father tender,
Throned amid clouds insufferably bright,
Evoked, and bidding it with beauty dight
Into His presence, thus His Words addressed
To Death, whose robes were woven out of night
And of the black eclipse beloved the best,
And Life, who prinked with pearls her variegated vest.

"Spirit of beauty, and of love and light,
Whose being, formless, but informing runs
Through all the myriad modes of day and night,
From the amœba to the quenchless suns;
And thou, fair spirit whom thy sister shuns,
As sunlight shadow, ye have been to me
Loyal and faithful as sequestered nuns,

Since o'er the world I flashed my Majesty,
And out of chaos called the myriad worlds that be!

"And from eternity, that fountain whence
All forms that were, or are, or will be, flow,
My will decrees that golden eloquence
Which ravishes like vesper winds that blow
Musk o'er the senses in the world below,
This day in music dropping from your tongue,
Shall make this spirit all incarnate glow,
This lovely spirit innocently young,
Or follow death to halls with stars and cressets hung!"

He ceased, and waving his bright diamond wand,
That on the brilliancy that girt Him round
Flashed a more vivid light, as on a pond
Glitters the lightning, bade the spirit, wound
With flowing splendors and with beauties crowned,
That bloom in rainbows, his sweet lips unlock,—
The silver sluices of susurrant sound,
Lips that the sweetest, maddest music mock
In vain, though Pan himself piped to his fleecy flock.

Then Life arose, a golden exultation
  Flitting and flushing through her limbs of light
Like summer flashes, that with fine pulsation
  Glimmer through vapors that are warmly bright.
  Life rose, and beaming on the spirit white,
That trembled like a star involved in mist,
  Eyes that outsparkled all the orbs of night,
Thus spake, and Powers and Dominations list,
To catch her words that fell like gleaming amethyst.

"Spirit, that standest like a silver star,
  Pausing in doubt between the night and day,
Whether to wander into space afar,
  To worlds where fancies amid rainbows play,
  Or here abide in Heaven's transcendent ray,
Mine is the power, if choosing to assume
  Bright incarnation like a star in spray,
Thou willest to be mine, to give thee bloom
And beauty like to that which doth the world
      illume.

"Yet ere the soft susurrus of Persuasion
  Breathe its sweet music on the trancèd soul,
Seemly is it a vision of creation
  Mine on thy spirit tremulous should roll,
  Informing it with what it would extol.

Gaze therefore when the wind uplifts the light,
On yonder orbs, that like a painted scroll
Unfold their luminations to the sight,
And flash their pendulous splendor on thy being bright.

"That light with which the earth is circumvested,
Like lucid diamond or circumfluous gold,
Those mighty mountains carved in thunder, wrested
From the black whirlwind when the world was old,
Those glancing waters like an ocean rolled
Of undulating lightning liquefied,
And the fair fields with flushing flowers enscrolled,
All, all are mine, adown the light I glide,
Walk on the stormy winds, and on the tempest ride.

"Gaze where the sunbow bends its arch of gold,
And red and amethyst above the hills,
Like to an aureole that doth enfold
Some gentle virgin whom a tyrant kills;
And where the cataract its splendor spills
And bellowy thunder in the canyon deep,
Note the large life and multiform that fills

The teeming uplands where the rivers creep,
And swan-like Commerce sails with proud majestic sweep.

"That beauty which like music incarnated,
And crystallized in variegated forms,
That bloom with which the woof is permeated
Of yonder world, and which the splendor warms,
And kindles into brilliant life that swarms
Where'er the sunlight glints,—that beauteous blush
Which brightens, vivifies, and then informs
The starry shapes with loveliness,— all gush
From those ethereal flames that through my being flush.

"There genius like the elemental splendor
Of gold dissolving in translucent dew,
Or shattered diamonds when their spirits render
Unto the ether their prismatic hue,
In other forms their being to renew,—
There genius, hundred-handed, Argus-eyed,
With spirit which nor Time nor Space can mew,
Sweeps through the universe with pinions wide,
Where suns round fiery suns in boundless orbits ride.

"That matchless Love, which is the bright expression
By forms extrinsic of the Soul Supreme,
That potency which leaves its fine impression,
And like a thread of lightning runs between
The fibres of vitality,— that splendid dream
Through which the earth as through a rainbow bright
Passes in joy, that trembles all a-gleam,
There lives in bowers with splendid jewels dight,
Which throw a glory on parti-colored light.

"Oh! scorn it not,— 'tis perfume, it is musk,
With dulcet music softly interfused,
'Tis starlight tangled in purpurean dusk,
And by a subtle mystery transfused
To flaming flowers; it is wine, infused
With hydromel, in every panting vein;
'Tis witching madness tenderly diffused
Through every tissue like a fiery rain,
Passing with kindling light and fever through the brain.

"There Joy abides, not bliss ineffable,
Ecstatic joys like those obtaining here,
Where all is placid, deep and equable,
But rapture tinctured and perfused with fear,

Which but accentuates and makes it dear,—
Even as Sunshine, though 'tis ever bright,
Is trebly beautiful on moor and mere,
When through the tempest rolling on the night
The strong young morning pours his fiery floods
of light.

"Joy is a rainbow of a thousand tints,
A restless soul the splendor of whose plumes
Depends upon the glancing light that glints
Between the magic meshes, and illumes
With beams that fall in diamonds through
blooms
Of versi-colored beauty: 'tis a sprite
Mercurial as winds in purple glooms,
Or scintillations of the stars of night,
And feeds on music, flowers, and iridescent light.

"And, O fair spirit, there's a bliss beyond
The deep strong happiness, secure and mild,
Or that of loving hearts dissolved in fond
And languorous embraces, 'tis the wild
Tumultuous joy that thrills the froward child
Of Nature in her majesty, when night,
And densest thunder into mountains piled,
And hurled by the tornado's fearful might
Across the sky in floods of red tempestuous light,

"Conspire to form a battle so sublime,
So wildly grand and so magnificent,
As ne'er broke forth, since first Titanic Time
Brake with a thunderburst the firmament
Of sheeted lightning and of gloom that pent
His giant spirit in the black abysm
Of mighty chaos, while the whirlwind blent
With fire and death rushed through the awful schism
That, with terrific roar, announced a cataclysm.

"Yet as all Beauty like the guelder-rose
Is shadowed by its leaves verticillate,
And set with thorny spines whence sorrow flows,
So the bright bliss beyond the opal gate
Of nether life is tarnished with the hate
And seeming ills that in the dross inhere,
Or flow from limitations of their state;
Seeming, I say, for, in the crystal clear
Of placid Wisdom seen, they wise and good appear.

"That grief which darkens with a deep eclipse,
The unlanguageable beauty of the mind,
That poignant pain whose pestilential lips
Feed on the vitals as a fiery wind

Gnaws the light larch or liquidambar's rind:
Yea, every form of suffering may be
Transmuted into flowers of gold refined,
By Fortitude, that heavenly alchemy
Whose sublimating power turns dust to brilliancy.

"Shrink not from Pain: it is the shower of fire,
Through which the spirit, brightly purified,
Passes on pinions of sublime desire
Out of the shadow of Despair and Pride,
Into the light where Seraphim abide.
Pain is the path of flame the saints have trod,
The font baptismal of the Sanctified,
The thorny coronal and bloody rod
That smote the sacred flesh of the Incarnate God.

"Live, and bring genius and sublime endeavor
And the deep forces of a manful life
Into the serried lines that fain would sever
The ranks of Wrong in the eternal Strife
'Twixt Good and Ill,—a war unto the knife.
Be thou the champion bold, whose trumpet tones,
Thrilling an age with sin and murder rife,
Urge Freedom to assume her throne of thrones,
And turn to pæans of joy a nation's dying groans."

She ceased, and, lo! as comets leave behind
A light of glory in the burning sky,
Or as the setting sun the ponent wind
And golden west imprints with every dye,
Her florid language and enkindling eye
Fired the bright ether till a rosy streak
Flushed through its beauty and its brilliancy;
She ceased, and, conscious that her words were weak,
Retired, while crimson bloom incarnadined her cheek.

Then Death uprose, and from her mobled brow
Flung wide her veil as black as thunder-gloom.
And, oh! what language can describe the glow;
The wondrous beauty and ethereal bloom,
The light, the music, mingled with perfume,
That flashed in splendor from her godlike eye!
It was as if with a volcanic boom
A glorious sunburst on a stormy sky
Blazed with the dazzling sun of Immortality.

"Ah me!" she said, "how well can Sophistry,
With words that sparkle on their rainbow wings,
Dazzle the mind, and by its witchery
Lead it where'er it lists with silken strings!

LIFE AND DEATH

She is a snake that hides her lightning stings
Beneath the rose whose rustle drowns her hiss,
A siren, who bedizened o'er with rings,
And opal and smaragdus, with a kiss
Betrays the ill-starred youth she hurls into th'
abyss!

"Oh! what is earthly Being but the roots,
The blind amorphous rootlets of that tree
Whose giant trunk into the heaven shoots,
Whose leaves are stars of immortality,
Whose flowers are splendors of eternity!
Oh! what is Life but those bare thunder-blocks
That frown above a wilderness of sea,
Above whose sullen roar and angry shocks
The gorgeous sunbow blooms on Heaven's ethereal
locks!

"Life is the shadow of that light supernal,
Whose Beauty broken into diamond tints,
By the pure crystal of the Love eternal,
Kindles the universe and glows and glints
On incarnated splendors and imprints
Its glory on them. Life is the black gloom,
The stormy darkness of the deep, that hints
Of suns, extinguished by the blast of doom
Or swept into oblivion by the red simoom.

"And what the bliss that life subdial gives,
To that transcendent and profound delight
That floods the spirit and forever lives
In bowers of beauty and eternal light?
What is the splendor of the spangled night,
The lusciousness that lurks in nectarine,
To those Elysian joys, those glories bright,
Whose white refulgence from the brow divine
Floods with aerial gold the flashing hyaline?

"Glory! What is it but a fiery splendor,
A blazing arch of coruscating flame,
Reared unto genius or to Beauty tender,
Until the storm that venerates no name
Bursts on the scintillating bow of fame,
And, dashing it to earth, mid clouds of fire,
Whirls it with scornful breath of burning blame
Full in the favorite's face, and in its ire
Turns the triumphal-arch into a funeral pyre!

"And Love, what is it but a golden vision,
A starry exhalation of the night,
Whose perfumed whisper tells of vales Elysian,
Paven with sardonyx and essonite!—
But falsely, for those gardens of delight
Stretch far away beyond the western wave,

Swept by the tempest in his fiery might,
And they who for the fruit the storm would brave
Find naught but marish wells, a desert, and a grave.

"And what is Genius but a glow-worm's light,
A feeble glimmer in a glen of gloom,
A beam that like a vein of silver bright
Runs through the midnight veil of vengeful doom;
It is a flash extinguished by the boom
That trumpeted its glory to the day;
A star, that like sweet music in a room
Is sweetest as it falls and fades away;
A golden statue standing upon feet of clay!

"A brilliant Spirit on triumphant wings,
Wheeling through circles of its own delight,
Up to the belvedere of Heaven springs,
And, soaring on to the empyrean height,
Sweeps through the region of eternal light.
But, lo! a sudden tempest on a spire
Of flame and death arrests his downward flight,
And, hurtling forward its red bolt of fire,
Transpierces the proud bird and hurls him in the mire.

"That dazzling Beauty o'er the ether beaming,
That radiance which instars the ambient air,
That light in music and in splendor streaming
On starlets pendulous or rainbows rare,
That charms the thunder in its gloomy lair,
What is it to the brilliant brow of Him,
The transcendental glory of whose fair
And radiant features makes the sunshine dim,
And flashes through the world to its remotest rim?

"Oh, how can earthly beauty, faint and fleet,
Transient as foam bells on a summer stream,
Or that ethereal translucent sleet
Of starry silver whose refulgent gleam
Is evanescent as a rosy dream,—
Oh, how can beauty which is but a blot,
A brinded blot upon the brilliant beam
Of Heaven, compare with Splendor without spot,
With Light Eternal kindled by Eternal Thought?

"All earthly forms in gradual transition
Through birth and beauty pass to pale decay;
Pass to Oblivion, and ordained excision
Through glamours golden and through glimmers gay:
Bloom is the bright ephemeron, whose day

The King's Library

Sinks in the stagnant wave of endless night;
And glory, evanescent as a ray
Of starshine shivered upon chabasite,
Fades with the flickering fire that fed its fickle light.

"In vain to brim the heart's unsated calice,
Their sweetest muscatel such joys distil:
In vain! — for oh! th' insatiable chalice,
Though all the mulse of love and music fill
Its beauty to the brim, is thirsty still.
A deeper bliss, a nectar more divine,
And supersensual, the cup must thrill,
Ambrosial dews, ethereal muscadine,
The vintage virginal of Christ's envermeiled vine!"

She ceased, and in the air the warm vibrations
Of her sweet speech of aspirated gold
With music filled the sky, and 'luminations,
And iridescent colors manifold.
Oh! 'twas a rapturous vision to behold
The play of bright prismatic tints that glowed
Around the music as it onward rolled;
For on the crest of every wave there rode
Aerial hues that changed with every line that flowed.

Then did the Spirit poise itself in air,
The young-eyed Spirit whom the Father called
From night and nothingness, and glowing there,
Before the Everlasting One, who walled
The lightning in the tempest and enthralled
The smoking thunder, blushingly began
His handsel effort, whilst the Powers extolled
The lovely lights that o'er his beauty ran,
And diamondizing wings, that trembled like a fan:

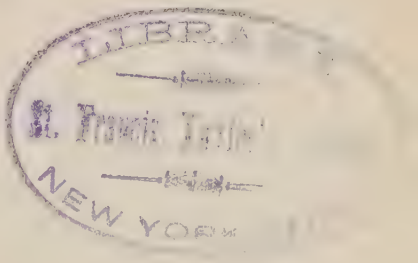
"Father of Light, and Life, and Love, and Pleasure;
And ye, fair Princess of the splendid skies,
Though bliss untold, undreamed of, without measure
Pervades these blooming powers of Paradise,
And glories glitter that angelic eyes
Can scarce sustain, yet doth my soul confess
That incarnated in the world that lies
Beyond the stars, by merit and by stress
Of suffering, it would attain this Happiness!

"Mine eyes are dazzled with the gorgeous splendor
That falls around in diamonded showers,
And sparkles on all sides in glories tender
Or tints with versi-colored light the flowers,
That breathe of musk in amaranthine bowers;

Mine ears are ravished with the music golden
That falls in ripples from the topaz towers,
But yet I would perceive the Unbeholden,
And tread the fiery path trod by the martyrs olden.

"'Tis not that glory of which Life hath spoken
Allures me with its aureole of fire,
Its rainbow glitter and as diamonds broken,
Its golden zoster and its jewelled tire;
For these are shadows to the rolling spire
Of flame and splendor that above us whirls,
And, thrilling with its beams the golden lyre,
The softest, sweetest, maddest music hurls
In colored curves that gleam like amethysts and pearls.

"'Tis not that Beauty lures me with her bloom,
The starlike splendor of her shining front,
Her words that gleam like jewels in the gloom,
And laughing eyes of hyacinthizont;
For Beauty's but a dewdrop from the Font,
The glorious Font of Loveliness and Light,
'Tis but the shadow of the golden Mont,
The pale reflection of the lustre bright
Of Him who holds in equipoise the day and night.



"Nor Love, which in its motion elemental
Is only Self, sublimed and purified,
Ah, no! the union with the Transcendental,
Where self immersed in God is glorified,
Is bliss to which all other bliss beside
Is as the wormwood unto hydromel,
Is as the murmur of the water-side
Unto the mighty bursts of song that swell
In golden storms upon these fields of astrofel.

"No, if my spirit from its full-orbed splendor
Would pass through darkness to its chrysalis
In dull carnation, 'tis that it would render
The mundane life more mindful of the bliss
That is the essence and the breath of this.
'Tis that 'twould wean it from the vile and vernile,
Translate it far beyond the precipice,
And so, suffusing it with light supernal,
Lift it above itself into the Life Eternal.

"To urge on man the life that's lived in spirit,
High in the rarest altitudes of soul,
That just, and purified, he may inherit
The Life, pre-ordinated as his goal,
The deathless diadem of self-control.
Oh! this be mine! be this my heavenly mission,
That in the Book of Gold I may enscroll

The name of legions, who by sin's elision
In ecstasy may gaze upon the glorious Vision!"

He spake, all bright with rosy perturbation;
  The splendor flashing through his lucent limbs,
In the prefulgence of its radiation,
  Surpassing even the white sun that dims
  Each several star that in its glory swims:
He spake, and golden blushed, as o'er him bent
  Th' approving Deity: — then to the rims
Of planets ultimate the myriads sent
A thunder-burst of song that shook the firmament.

"Glory to God, the Wisdom of the wise,
  The Beauty of the beautiful, the Light
That was ere Time Titanic in the skies
  Hung his great pendulum, the sun-orb bright,
  The golden arbiter 'twixt Day and Night; —
That was, and is, and will be, when the world,
  Shattered and shivered by the thunder's might,
On fiery blasts to ruin will be hurled,
Sun, stars, and all, in one tremendous maelstrom
    whirled!

NIAGARA FALLS, New York.

IMMORTALITY

To-day I saw an eagle die. Afar
He soared among the clouds, a glorious thing,
Then swiftly fell, as falls a shooting star,
Kindling the heavens with its lightning-wing.
And when the bird lay panting on the ling,
And closed fore'er his truculent, fierce eye,
Methought I heard my spirit questioning
Itself this wise: Shall I, shall I, too, die;
No more to soar, nor roll, nor revel through the sky?

When Death shall come with look of amethyst
And shall dissolve the wreaths of flesh that shroud
My beauty, as the sun dissolveth mist,
Shall I spring upward, and beyond the cloud,
And shine, a star, amid the starry crowd:
Shall I endure in life lived otherwhere,
Or shall I perish like the eagle proud,

IMMORTALITY

Forever dead unto the light and air,
To music, beauty, love, and all things good and fair?

Shall soul like Shakespeare or like Dante die:
Fade like the flowers on a young girl's grave:
Die like the belted bee, the butterfly,
Or the weak wind that swoons upon the wave?
Shall souls that to their own creations gave
Immortal life, not be immortal, too:
Spirits as lofty as high Heaven's nave:
Shall these Intelligences fade like dew,
Die like the royal bird, pierced by the bird-bolt through?

That soul which penetrates transtellar space,
Measures the interval 'twixt star and star,
Weighs the stupendous sun, and knows to trace
The orbits of the satellites afar,
Each shining like a sphere of satin-spar,
Or find the globe round which the systems fly;
That soul, which springing over hill and scar
To Heaven, as to its home, shall it, too, die,
And perish like the body it doth vivify?

Shall thought endure, and shall the thinker die:
Shall Homer's verse for ages yet be read,

IMMORTALITY

The heirloom of each wondering century,
And Homer be irrevocably dead?
Shall the great soul that like a sunset shed
A glory on the world dissolve with it,
Fade like the fog-bow on the mountain-head,
Die like the hemlock, rent and thunder-split,
Or like a carrion-crow cast headlong in a pit?

The star, like gold on lightning-wings uprist,
The star that neither thinks, nor moves, nor feels,
A thing insensate in the purple mist,
Burns, and will burn as long as Heaven reels
Beneath the roll of Time's tremendous wheels:
Yes, it will burn unto remotest time,
Until the trumpet-note of Ruin peals,
And shall the mind of man, the soul sublime,
Endure but as the mist or as the morning rime?

On desert sands, beside the lordly Nile,
The far-famed pyramids of Egypt rise:
The wonder of the world. Each glorious pile
Lifts its tremendous stature to the skies,
And time and storm and Heaven itself defies;
And shall these monuments of granite last,
Shall these things live with life that never dies,

While they who reared them in the giant past
Sleep evermore in dust, in iron Death held fast?

The sculptor loves the radiant white form
  He carved of moonlight turned to marble hard:
The artist gazing on the beauty warm
  Of some fair pictured girl as sweet as nard
  Loves his great masterpiece. So, too, the bard
Adores his work, and wishes it to last,
  Nor perish utterly like to a shard;
And shall the Master mind, the Maker, blast
His greatest work, the soul, in His own image cast?

The spirit is a spark from Deity,
  A golden sunbeam of that glorious Light
That turns the wave to liquid lazuli,
  And laughs to silver all the nave of night.
  And shall this particle, this splendor bright,
This soft effulgence of the fire of God;
  Shall it not live, a flame intensely white,
As liveth He — but like the golden-rod
Wither and wilt, and fade upon the faded sod?

No! there is that in man which doth defy
  Time, and the despotism of the tomb;
And reaching upward to the ambient sky

With sunset gold, and flowers of fire, a-bloom,
And clouds of vaporous ruby that illume
The world below, soars upward to that Light
Which moves in rustling music and perfume
Throughout the universe, and girds with might
Day with his golden wings and star-resplendent
Night!

That Power which gave the spirit wings to soar
Beyond the beautiful translucent skies,
To Heaven's castellated mirador,
Ne'er meant the soul to such a height should rise
Only to die, as the poor sparrow dies.
No, He, who hateth all superchery,
Ne'er smiled a welcome in His glorious eyes,
Only to brand the soul with obloquy,
And bid it sleep fore'er in cold nonentity.

Two hundred feet adown the iron wall
Niagara's furious flood and mighty flows;
Five rushing seas of rolling thunder fall,
And, leaping through the iridescent bows,
Roar with the battle-shout of myriad foes.
A mountain melting into foaming seas,
A flood of sapphire and of pearl it glows,
Wild as a hurricane 'mid forest trees,
Fierce as volcanic fires that shake the Sicilies.

But not Niagara can satisfy,
  Nor great Yosemite, where mountains grand
Rise to the very roof-tree of the sky:
  Stupendous pyramids of granite planned
  And reared in thunder by the Titan's hand:
Cliffs over which the tempest never rings
  Nor flies its flag of lightning: crags that stand
So high, the flood that down the mountain springs,
Two thousand feet below its rushing thunder flings.

Nor Intellect itself can satisfy;
  For Mind is finite, and can ne'er control
The secrets recondite of sea and sky,
  The reason of the stars that round us roll,
  Nor say what life is, nor explain the soul.
At every step it meets an obstacle,
  And far from reaching its ulterior goal,
Oft grown despondent, dark, and sceptical,
Loses itself in night, and Doubt's black debacle.

Nothing below can satisfy the sprite;
  Love, beauty, fame, nor riches manifold:
These make the sphere wherein we move more bright,
  But are mere tinsel where we look for gold,
  True pleasure's counterfeit, as base as bold.

And since no joy terrestrial can fill
The soul that yearns for happiness untold,
There must be purer bliss, which, by God's will,
In regions otherwhere the sun-clad soul will thrill.

For everything fulfils its destiny,
And has its wants and requisites supplied:
The light gives life and vigor to the tree,
The fagot food to fire, the throbbing tide
Is fed by torrents from the mountain-side.
All things attain their fulness and their height
Except the soul of man: this neither pride
Of power, nor wealth, nor glory can delight,
For still it throbs for life beyond the realm of night.

For life it yearns, immortal life beyond
The sphere of mundane and contingent things;
For life, in love's bright dome of diamond,
Where Music catches on her flashing wings
Ten thousand colors, and around her flings
Roses of song, that with their fragrance fill
The golden air,— exultant life that springs
Like morning on the amethystine hills,
And with its rivery rhyme the halls of Heaven thrills.

IMMORTALITY

For life it yearns with that transcendent power
  Which domed with light the spacious firmament,
Infused a star-like splendor in the flower,
  And carved the mountain-pillars, lightning-brent,
  That God who shadows with His palliament
Of filmy gold the sun-strewn universe,
  And beautified the earth's broad dimplement,
Despite man's treason, and the crimson curse
Of vice, that in its whirlpool all things would immerse.

And it shall live; yea, spirit shall persist
  In soothfast splendor when the glorious sun
And all the stars of fire and amethyst
  Shall rush to crashing ruin every one,
  And the world's work forevermore be done.
Yes, suns will die and systems fade away,
  And earth in vortices of flame be spun,
But spirit will endure, a light for aye,
A diamond flashing gold in God's transplendent ray.

Yea, spirit shall outsoar the awful night
  That on the wreck of systems shall descend,
And shall upshoot, a glorious shaft of light,
  Until it springs where darkness shall have end
  And high o'erhead the rainbowed heavens bend.

IMMORTALITY

There in the beauty of the God triune,
  Wherein all splendors in the highest blend,
The soul will bask, or in the plenilune
Of love with the elect have sisterly commune.

Oh, let me so believe! Oh, let me think
  That death is not oblivion, but a mist
That shrouds as with a veil of sunset pink
  The soul as lovely as a pale sunrist,
  Till by the starshine of God's glory kissed
It soars above the golden heights beyond:
  There amid fields of asphodel and cist,
To dwell in love as pure as diamond,
  With God and those sweet souls we hold in memory fond.

SEA-LONGINGS

[To Louise Chandler Moulton]

I long for the keen salt air of the sea,
And the Titans' tumult and thunder;
And the solemn strength and sublimity
Of the songs of the sea-gods, under.

For the song, I long, of the sea-gods strong,
And the vigorous blow and bluster;
The leap and sweep of the billows along,
And the stormy light and the lustre.

For the white-winged ships that sail in the sun,
And the white-winged waves that bear them;
For the yachts that over the waters run,
And the breezes that race and dare them.

I long for the sight of the sea-gulls free,
And the wash and swash of the waters;
For the surf and spray of the salty sea,
And a glimpse of the dark sea-daughters.

And the fisher's note and the fisher's boat,
And the voice of the piping plover;
For the foam and fume, and the weeds that float,
And the loomgale hurrying over.

For I was born by the boisterous sea;
And its storm and thunder and madness
Are deep in the blood and the heart of me,
Its music and sunlight and sadness.

And I love the waves, with their rush and roar,
As the gier-eagle loves the mountains;
As the wild wolf white loves the northern shore,
And the sun-bird southerly fountains.

NIAGARA FALLS.

LINES

[Written on the recovery of a beautiful child]

Bird of the summer-time sing
With thy voice velvet soft as the rose is:
Bird of the summer-time bring
To my heart all the mirth of July,
For the cheeks that were pale are now pink,
Yes, pink as the bud that uncloses,
And the lips that were white are red now
As roses of fire in the sky!

Bird of the summer-time sing,
For the heart in my bosom is dancing,
Dancing for very delight
That the dead is brought back from the tomb:
Dancing for joy that the eyes
That had lost all their glitter and glancing,
Now gleam and now beam and darkle,
And sparkle like gems in the gloom.

Bird of the summer-time sing,
Oh, sing in thy happiest measure,

LINES

For the light that went out has revived,
And is shining and streaming afar:
Pour all the gold of thy heart out,
For my soul has recovered its treasure.
Day has recovered its sunshine,
And night its most beautiful star!

Bird of the summer-time sing,
For the soul of the summer that slumbered
Has come back to brighten and lighten
The gold and greenth of the glen.
Sing for my Palace-of-Pearl,
My own little girl that was numbered
With the dead, has returned to the living,
And gladdens my pulses again.

Bird of the summer-time sing,
For no longer there's sorrow nor sadness:
Sing of the lilacs of May
And the royal red roses of June;
Sing till the neighborhood ring,
For the world is a world full of gladness,
A song made of sapphire and silver,
And sung to a silvery tune.

THE LAST TIME AT THE PIANO

Across the room with feeble steps and slow,
To where her dearly loved piano stood,
The young girl went, oh, whiter than the snow,
And weaker than a wand of willow-wood.

A beauty once, but beautiful no more,
With hollow cheeks and sad and languid eyes,
And limbs that scarce could bear her o'er the floor,
And hands through which one might perceive
the skies.

She sate her down, and lightly o'er the keys
Ran her white fingers, till they charmed to gold
The noble instrument, and melodies
As sweet as songs of seraphim out-rolled.

O God! those sounds, how beautiful they were!
How rich, how sweet, how silver-soft they fell!
It seemed as if all Heaven sang to her,
And every star there was a tinkling bell.

And in the room there was a fragrance fine,
  Like that of roses or of balsams sweet,
As if the music of young Angeline
  Fell down in flowers all around her feet.

And, oh, her face, her thin, transparent face!
  How bright it shone, like living, glowing gold,
As if, by virtue of interior grace,
  She chanced the smile of Jesus to behold.

Then to her mind there came another song,
  A song of summer skies and summer seas:
A song she loved to sing when she was strong
  Unto the one whom she was proud to please.

Sweetly and sadly rose the olden strain,
  But died away into a hollow moan,
While in her face there came a look of pain,
  And to her lips there came a sob and groan.

Then standing up, with arms above her head,
  The lily maiden looked unto the skies:
"O Father, take me to Thyself!" she said,
  The tears suffusing her once lustrous eyes.

And, bowing her little head above the keys,
  She sobbed, and shut the instrument fore'er;

THE LAST TIME AT THE PIANO

And thus it stands, with frozen melodies,
As when she closed it with her fingers fair.

Then to her bed the lily maiden went,
And veiled her little weary eyes for aye;
For o'er her couch the great archangel bent,
And kissed her beautiful white soul away.

THE FLAG OF FREEDOM

Flag of the fair and free,
Flag of the brave of old,
Long may you be the queen of the sea,
The glorious flag of Liberty,
And unfold,
To the gold of the light unrolled,
The stars and the bars and the beauty bold,
And wave for the brave,
Who would die to save
Thy fame unsoiled by the touch of a slave;
Then glow and blow
Where the torrents flow,
And the eagle screams o'er the world below!

Flag that our fathers bore
Through the fiery storm of fight,
And the battle's roar, that the lightnings tore,
In the fearful march to Georgia's shore,
In the sight
Of the fire balls bright, and the shells of night

THE FLAG OF FREEDOM

In the glorious warfare for the right:
Oh, wave, for the slave
They died to save
No longer wears the fetters of the knave;
But free as we,
As the bounding sea,
He walks in the broad light of Liberty!

Flag of the League of States,
Flag of the brave and free,
From the northern straits to the golden gates,
And the lotus land and the land of dates
O'er the sea,
May you be, on lock and lea,
The standard sheet of purity;
Of truth, and ruth
And a hardy youth
Exulting in their bloom and blooth,
And right and light
That love to smite
The Prince of Anarchy and Night!

Flag of the palm and pine,
Flag of the mountain-ash,
Long may you shine on the booming brine,
When the war-ships blaze in battle-line
'Mid the flash

And the crash, when the gunboats clash,
And thunderbolts through the tempest dash,
    And boom in the gloom
    Of the red simoom,
That screams in the storm with the shriek of
    doom,
    Till the roar is o'er
    On sea and shore
And Victory lights on thee once more!

THE LOOM OF LIFE

Beside a loom of thundering boom
An angel in cloth of gold
Sat weaving the tissue of human souls,
His task appointed of old;
And ever like lightning the shuttle flew,
And ever with thunderous roar,
The mighty loom in the working-room
Went on with rattle and blore.

And as the web from the yarn-beam rolled,
A seraph with glittering shears
Cut it, and dipped it in molten gold
Or steeped, and stained it in tears:
Dipped it, and dyed it in crimson warm,
Or scarlet and amethyst,
Or wet it with drops from a thunder-storm,—
But this one ever he kissed.

And some of the yarn reeled off was fine,
As fine as a silken twist;

Fragile and fine as the golden line
That shoots through the morning mist.
And othersome, and the most, by far,
Was a weft of coarser thread;
But all was bright as the silvern star
That beams and gleams overhead.

And many a figure of strange device,
And pattern of quaint design
Were woven in with a skill precise,
By Ariel fingers fine.
Baroque mosaics in red and blue,
Embroideries, rich in gems,
Morisco work of various hue,
And beautiful anadems.

But over them all, and under them all,
Like the white light in the skies,
Was His face who built the mountain wall,
And mingled the rainbow dyes.
Yes, whether in fabric coarse or fine,
In soul of poet or slave,
God's image shone, as the heavens shine,
In the rimpled, dimpled wave.

Rattled and brattled away the loom,
The yarn through the heddles flew;

And the shuttles shot through all the boom,
Like the gold-light through the blue.
It was the soul of a genius now,
That rolled like gold on the reel,
And the rose-light flushed the angel's brow,
As the furnace-light does steel.

Finer than silk was the fabric spun,
And rich with bezetta red,
The gold and blue of the setting sun,
Or the rainbow overhead.
But, ah! the colors were splotched with tears,
With thunder-drops they were wet;
And a hideous troop of griefs and fears
On the soul was limned in jet.

Poor hapless spirit! the angel sighed,
Thou art of that godlike band
That are formed to be their country's pride
And the glory of the land.
Beauty and splendor of soul is thine,
Grandeur and music and light;
But, ah! thy years shall be full of tears,
Grief and the darkness of night.

THE FIGHT OF THE LIONS

[To Captain Edward Johnstone]

With a rush and a roar
Like the waves on the shore
When the thunderbolt yells
With a voice loud as hell's,
Two Libyan lions leaped out of the night,
Leaped out of the woods with a crash and a dash
And tore o'er the desert that gleamed in the flash
Of the moon that made all the plain white.
On, with the speed of the storm they flew,
Mighty monsters tremendous in thew;
Sides of iron and cords of wire,
Muscles of brass and eyes of fire;
Throats of thunder and bones of steel,
Hearts of granite too hard to feel:
A lioness one and a lion the other,
The devil's dam, and the devil's brother.
But, lo! as along they storm and bound,
Shaking the quaking, quivering ground,

Fuming and foaming, and breathing fire,
Blacker than thunder-clouds in their ire,
Another lion from the jungle creeps,
And out on the moonlit desert leaps,
And swift in the track of the tempest sweeps.
Fleet as meteors in the sky
Over the sand-dune the lions fly:
Breathing hard like a furnace red,
As on they bound o'er the desert dead.
On for a mile they tear o'er the plain
Wild as the torrents swol'n with rain.
Over the sand they scurry like death,
And the frightened forest holds its breath.
The tiger's heart in his breast is still,
The leopard's blood in his veins grows chill,
As they look through the brush with a fearful eye
At the wild tornado thundering by.
But see! the beast that is in the rear
With every bound comes rapidly near,
Till the other, conscious of swift pursuit,
Turns in his traces to meet the brute,
The lioness sinking upon the sand
To breathe, and gaze on the battle grand.
A moment the lions each other eye,
Lashing their sides most furiously,
Their bristling manes like a ruff erect,

Their brindled hides with foam beflecked.
One moment the twain collect their strength,
Then a quiver runs through their awful length;
A low growl swells to a mighty roar,
Like that of winds on a rocky shore.
Then they grasp the earth in their iron claws
And spring in the air with open jaws.
Like two dense clouds in the stormy sky,
Like ships-of-war on the ocean high,
Like two great demons begot in hell,
The monsters meet with a fearful yell.
Full in mid air the furious foes
Crash with a terrible shock that throws
Them back on the sand a yard or more,
Their shaggy breasts beflecked with gore.
Another yell, and another spring,
And all their thunderous weight they fling
Full at the other, and give such strokes
As would shatter pines and stagger oaks.
With eyes that blaze and with teeth that gnash
Again they meet with an awful crash,
Tear each other with fangs and claws,
And crunch their bones in their iron jaws:
Grapple and wrestle, and grind and growl,
Battle and batter, and rage and howl.
Over and over the sands they roll,
Fiercer than fire in the devil's bowl,

THE FIGHT OF THE LIONS

Biting and smiting, the bloody dust
Whirling around in a stormy gust.
Over an hour on the moonlit sand
The Titans struggle in battle grand,
Puffing and panting like engines vast,
Frothing and foaming, and bleeding fast.
Weaker and weaker the combat grows,
Lighter and lighter now fall the blows,
Swifter and swifter the life-blood flows,
Till reeling round on the sand they snap
And tumble and snarl, and scratch and slap.
Then once again they grapple and grip
And deal each other a savage clip,
Express their hate in a dying roar,
And fall together to rise no more.
There in their weltering gore they lie,
Puffing, and panting painfully.
Feebly lifting a bloody paw
To strike each other on breast and jaw:
An awful picture of massive strength
Reduced to powerlessness at length.
Nearer together the giants crawl,
And in their mutual hatred maul
And tear each other, till life is fled,
And the twain on the sands lie stark and dead.
Then the female stretches herself, and yawns,
Her tawny hide as slick as a fawn's,

Over to where the monsters lie
In their grumous blood walks lazily,
Sniffs at the bodies, then o'er them strides,
And out on the moonlit desert glides.

LONGINGS

Oh, give me the flush of the rosy morn
And the flash of the sun on the sea,
And the blush of the haws on the black of the thorn,
And a run in the sun o'er the countryside dun,
With a horse speeding on like a shot from a gun,
And a fence to leap over that others would shun,
And I'll laugh at the rich in my glee.

Oh, give me the sweep of a tight canoe,
On the deep of an opal lagoon,
And the light aloft in the welkin blue
And the whirl and the swirl of the waters of pearl,
And the silvery laugh of a light-hearted girl,
And the lilt of the lark or the music-mad merle,
And for fame I'll not give a doubloon.

Oh, give me a day 'mong the firs and pines
With the play of the sun and the shade;
And a shot at the moose with his towering tines

As he bounds from the hounds through the glimmering grounds,
And the wood with the bark and the bellow resounds,
As he battles for life with the foe that surrounds,
And enrages him out on the glade.

Oh, give me the breeze of the Berkshire hills,
And the leas with their stubble of fogge;
And the rush and the roar of the mountain-ghylls,
And the fume and the boom like the roar of doom
Of the flashing flood through the foaming flume
And the sweep and leap through the shine and gloom,
And the rave of the waves on the bog.

Oh, give me to ramble a summer's day
Through brake and bramble, through field and fell,
My heart attuned to the music of May,
And my steps full as free as the wind on the lea,
As the bee in the bush, as the bird in the tree;
For this is the life, without trouble or dree,
That a gypsy like me loves so well!

THE DARKENED ROOM

Deep in my heart hung round with sable sorrow,
Within the silent chamber of the dead,
Low lieth she, for whom the young May morrow
Its scent hath vainly shed.

There on her snowy couch the snowy maiden,
Her golden hair upon the pillow spread,
With fairest flowers and whitest lilies laden,
In shimmering silk lies dead.

Silent the tongue whence golden music bubbled,
Fled from the lip the smiles that were its soul;
Closed the bright eyes, as blue as skies untroubled
By the long thunder's roll.

Frozen the marble brow the lips of lover
In ardent roseal kiss had never pressed;
Waxen the hands as pure as Heaven above her,
Upon her lily-breast.

THE DARKENED ROOM

Hush, O my spirit! let no sound of weeping
Disturb the silence of this sacred ground;
Let not a sob disturb the maiden's sleeping,
The maiden slumber bound!

Softly, step softly in this house of sorrow,
Lightly, bend lightly o'er the sainted dead;
See how her face new loveliness doth borrow,
As 'twere transfigurèd.

Starlight, if frozen and if finely fashioned
By angel hands into a form divine,
Were scarce so beautiful, so unimpassioned,
As this, our Geraldine.

Oh, I have chambers in my soul whose splendor
Outshines the halls of Solomon of old;
Chambers to furnish which the West doth render
Its amethyst and gold.

But there is one whose draperies so gloomy
And paraments as dark as stormy skies
I love,— one hall more sweet than gardens bloomy,
Where my dear sister lies.

Ah, well it is that in the closed recesses
Of our still souls there is a darkened room,

THE DARKENED ROOM

Where lieth low a maid whose yellow tresses,
And lips have lost their bloom.

One on whose brow the record of her beauty,
Still faintly traced like softened splendor lies,
To teach with silent lips the law of duty,
And lift us to the skies.

THE SEA

THE sea, the sea, how sweet to me the breath of
the salty sea,
The cry of the white gulls in the sky, that wheel
exultantly;
The wash and swash of the rolling surf as it
rushes up on the reach,
The rave and roar and fume and blore of the bil-
lows along the beach!

The sea, the sea, how sweet to me the bounding,
pounding sea,
The ships of the line on the foaming brine, and
the fair flag floating free;
The blustering blow of the winds that go o'er the
white waves marching on,
With the stately rime and measured time of the
Cossacks along the Don!

The sea, the sea, how dear to me the hearty,
healthful sea!
With its cooling balm from isles of palm that far
in the distance be;

Its sweeping song, so deep and strong, of Hope
and Youth and Love,
And its solemn praise through all its days of the
God that rules above!

The sea, the sea, how sweet to me the booming,
glooming sea!
With the ring and swing of the plunging bell as
it calls out warningly;
The fishers' song as they row along with strong
arms brown and bare,
And the plover's cry and the petrel shy as they
cut through the summer air!

The sea, the sea, how dear to me the wild, un-
trammelled sea,
With its mighty sweep and awful deep and its
moving majesty;
Its organ tones from the rocks and stones that
deep in the caverns lie,
Its anthem loud to the rolling cloud and the
arching heavens high!

The sea, the sea, O ye who be infirm, come out
to the sea,
When the breezes blow and the breakers flow
and the scud is flying free;

And the salty air, and the vigor rare of the leaping, sweeping brine,
Will whirl your blood in a bounding flood through your veins as red as wine!

The sea, the sea, oh, I love to be on the broad back of the sea,
In a tight, trim skiff, when the wind is stiff and the waves foam wrathfully;
For the moving flood excites the blood, and fills the heart with joy,
And makes the old man young again, and makes the youth a boy!

The sea, the sea, oh, I love to be forever beside the sea,
And hear the plash and dash and splash of the waters stretching free;
For I love its song so deep and strong, as I love the bugle's blast,
Its measured stride and plumes of pride like an army marching past!

DEAR NIAGARA

Often in my dreams, dear Niagara, I'm back again,
Back to thy waters that go thundering below;
Often in my dreams I can see the blackmack again
Flying o'er the flood in the sun's rubescent glow.
O my love, I can see the waters shimmering;
O my heart, I can see the mighty flow;
Light of my life, I can see the rainbow glimmering
Down there in the river, where the waves are white as snow!

Leaping down the ridge, I can see the torrents flash again,
Gold in the sunlight and silver in the moon;
And I can hear the reverberating crash again,
As the foaming freshets thunder on the dune.
O my life, how I love the water glittering,
Love thy sunsets, purple and maroon;
Heart of my heart, I can feel my pulses flittering,
Throbbing for thy love, like a blooming bride in June!

DEAR NIAGARA

Over in the orchard the apple-trees are pink again,
  Dainty is the primrose, the sassafras is sweet:
Hark! I can hear the golden bobolink again
  Singing to the lavender a-lying at his feet.
O my love, the happy, happy days I spent,
  Heart of my heart, in that beautiful retreat;
O my life, the music and the merriment,
  Down there in the garden where the rivulets meet!

Glorious Niagara! Niagara the beautiful!
  Thou art the jewel, the diamond of the West!
And all thy children, so loyal and so dutiful,
  Laud thee and honor thee, and love thee the best!
O my love, I long to see thy halls again,
  For my heart is full of all unrest;
Light of my life, I long to see the falls again,
  Once again, for thou indeed art Paradise the Blest!

A SIGH FOR THE LONG AGO

THE light is up in the morning,
And the lark is up in the blue,
And his silvery notes float downward
Like musical drops of dew.
I stand at my lattice listening,
And I would that I felt the joy,
To see the sun and hear the song,
That I felt when a little boy;
For the light is soft and golden,
And the music is golden, too,
But somehow they fail to move me
As they used to when life was new.

The breeze comes into the garden
With the scent of the red, red rose,
And the balm of the crimson balsams
That wake from their night repose;
The breeze comes in from the garden,
And its breathing is soft and cool,

For it dipped its wings in passing
In the wave of a pearly pool;
And it kisses mine aching eyelids
And my throbbing temples white,
But ah me! for the old-time breezes,
And the old, old-time delight!

The Beverly Bells are ringing,
And their sound is silvery clear,
And the rime and chime and the cadences
Fall soothingly on mine ear;
The robins all are astir below,
The juniper-birds above,
And all is bright in the morning light,
And is kind and sweet as love.
But the Bells of Beverly ringing,
And the bobolinks chirming low,
Awake in my heart no music
Like the music of long ago!

Oh, what was the charm of the old time,
That everything then could please?
Was the old-time light a softer light,
Or greener the old-time trees?
Had the birds of boyhood sweeter songs,
Or the buds a brighter bloom,

Or the lavender and the lilac-boughs
A more divine perfume?
I know not; I cannot make answer,
But down in my heart I know
That I miss in to-day the glory
I felt in the long ago.

SORROWS

Out of hopes like jewels shattered,
Out of rosy wishes scattered
Like the bloomy buds of crimson deflowered by the breeze;
Out of tears, and out of sorrow
Rise the splendors of the morrow,
Rise the purple-tinted promises of purer things than these.

Not until the sapphire splendid,
From the rock of granite rended,
'Neath the hand is chipped and chiselled, comes the perfect jewel bright;
Not until the shark is daunted
In the waters devil-haunted
Comes the diver with his pearl-stones gleaming like the stars of night.

Not until his heart is breaking
Sings the nightingale, awaking

All the wondering world with music such as
Heaven's self might claim;
Not until the fiery flowers
Of the heavens fall in showers
Shine the skies in all the rushing and the flushing
of their flame.

Out of toiling cometh treasure,
Out of grieving cometh pleasure,
Out of winter cometh spring-time with its blos-
soms, and its birds;
Out of darkness and of glooming
Cometh beauty, cometh blooming,
Cometh poesy, perfuming all the garden with her
words.

From the camp of dark disaster
Comes the conqueror, the master;
From the training-school of sorrow comes the
genius and the sage;
Come the mighty men who find them
Noble names to leave behind them,
Come the men who make the nation and illuminate
her page.

Grieve not, then, that thou dost sorrow,
For 'tis given thee to borrow

Strength to fight upon the morrow in the everlasting press.
Disappointments, sad and sadder,
Are but rounds unto the ladder
That is ever reaching upward to the turrets of success.

TINTORETTA

She was leading her steed to water,
A black-eyed Bohemian daughter,
And her lord, the chieftain who brought her
From the Land of the Sun, stood by: —
A sun-brown gypsy girl, slender,
But no queen hath the grace nor splendor
Of her face, nor the beauty tender
Of her beaming, gleaming eye.

Oh, her beauty of olivaster
Made my pulsatile heart beat faster,
And the faces of all who passed her
Looked back at the dusky pearl;
For the elegant calice-bearer
Of the Thunderer was not fairer,
Nor had coloring richer, rarer,
Than this dark Egyptian girl!

Her lips of carroon, and her wimple
With its gold galloon, and her simple

Attire of maroon with the rimple
  Of her lustreless blue-black hair,
And the lace on her cap, the splendor
Of her face in its innocence tender,
And her grace, all combined to render
  The maid bewitchingly fair.

A girl from the land of the flowers,
A girl from the land of the showers,
Of the mocking-birds and the bowers,
  With the crimson haws and hips,
She bore in her bosom its myrtle,
She wore its red rose on her kirtle,
And the scent of its valleys fertile
  Exhaled from her rose-pink lips.

She was kind as the skies above her;
For the children broke from their cover,
A sign that the cherubs all love her,
  At sight of her beauty bright,
And, forming a circle around her,
In a garland of roses wound her,
In fetters of floramour bound her,
  While she laughed, and her laugh was light.

Oh, never in hall nor pavilion,
A-dancing the merry cotillion,

With velvety cheeks of vermilion,
  Have I seen lady like her:
Not even the beautiful Hester,
With her laughing lips of samester,
And the many charms that invest her
  With a fragrance sweet as myrrh.

Not the water where swims the allis,
Not the lilium with its chalice
Of gold, nor the beautiful palace
  Of Cynthia, pale as pearl,
Nor the sweet and modest melissa,
Nor the sunbeams golden that kiss her,
Nor the birds that at even miss her,
  Were pure as this gypsy girl.

Yet a man without mind or morals,
Whose bosom is vile as orrels,
And who loves his roans and his sorrels
  Far more than he loves the maid,
Is the husband, monarch, and master
Of this woman of alabaster,
With the fragrance of adelaster
  In her glossy, flossy braid.

PRINTEMPS

AWAKE, heart of mine, with the heart of Nature wake,
And sing, for the hills and the rills have found a voice;
Awake, for the skies their burning banners shake,
And the brake and the lake in the sunny light rejoice!

Oh, sing, heart of me, for the lilacs are in bloom;
Sing, for their redolence is scenting all the air;
Sing, for the rivulets are flashing in the flume,
And down in the valleys the liliums are fair!

Oh, sing, for the freshets are leaping down the rocks,
And school-boys are skipping and tripping o'er the lea:
The catbird's about, and the bobolink he mocks,
And the blossoms of April are pink upon the tree!

PRINTEMPS

The primulas blow, where a month ago was snow
The crocus and jonquil are glinting in the glen;
And the bold, gold daffodils their gypsy faces show
By the hill and the rill that runs gayly to the fen.

Oh, sing, for there's balm and there's vigor in the breeze,
And the blood in a flood through the purple veins is whirled;
And the bird in the heart, like the bird among the trees,
Gives voice to the joy that is felt throughout the world!

Oh, sing, for the lambs o'er the ripple grasses run,
And the brass-backed bees, and the butterflies are here:
Sing, for the robins are a-whistling in the sun,
And the lavrock is lilting a song to his dear!

Oh, sing, heart of mine, for the winter-time is past,
And spring with its ling and its lavender is here:
The storm-light is gone, and the warm-light come at last;
And the breezes blow their balm on the calm of the mere!

THE ROSE OF JUNE

[To Mary Elizabeth Blake]

Sing loud, O lark, in the cloud,
  Sing clear, O bird, in the breer,
For the red, red rose that blows and glows,
  The red, red rose is here;
The red, red rose that blows and glows
  Where the rillet flows is here.

Sing soft, O breeze, aloft,
  Sing low, O wind, in the lane,
For the oriole, with his golden soul,
  And the finch are here again;
The oriole, with the golden roll
  Of his song, is here again.

The finch is here from the south
  With his witching melodies,
And the bobolink and the merry spink
  With their songs of the southern seas;
The merry spink in the blossoms pink
  With his songs of the summer seas.

THE ROSE OF JUNE

Burn red, O sun, o'erhead;
  Run down from the hills, O rills,
With a whirl and swirl, and birl and curl,
  And a purl like the merle that trills;
With a whirl and swirl and lisping purl,
  Like the melting merle that trills.

For the rose of June is here,
  The red, red rose of June,
And the dells and fells and sunlit swells,
  Like to bells, are all atune;
The dells and fells and sylvan cells,
  Like to bells, are all atune.

Then sing, O bird, in the ling,
  And wake, O lark, in the brake,
Till the heavens ring with the joy you bring
  And the sirens rise from the lake;
Till the heavens ring with the song you sing
  And the sirens spring from the lake.

CLEOPATRA TO CHARMIAN

Let the melting music golden
  Flood and flash and float around:
Sing me of the glories olden
  Of this ancient battle-ground:
Sing of beauty, sing of pleasure,
Sing of love, or sing of treasure,
Till you fill and thrill my leisure
  With the spirit of the sound.

Oh, the wine of life! it flushes
And it flashes and it gushes,
Through the burning blood that blushes
  At the sense of its own bliss:
Oh, the glances in the dances
And the music that entrances,
And the breeze that in the hushes
  Bears the perfume of a kiss!

Sing of Ramses and his glory,
  How he conquered with his glance:

How the warrior bore the hoary
  Earth upon his mighty lance.
And of Tothmes sing the splendor,
Tothmes terrible, yet tender,
Ever willing with his slender,
  Dark-eyed damoselles to dance!

Oh, the dancing and the whirling
Of the dancers, and the twirling
And the dizzy wheeling, swirling
  Of the music mad with joy;
And the glancing and the gleaming
Of the lustres, and the beaming
Of the jewels in the curling
  Locks of every maid and boy!

Why so merry? Ask the river
  Why it sparkles in the light;
Ask the palm-trees why they quiver
  When the breeze is sweet and slight;
Ask the vermeil vase of roses,
Ask the lotus that reposes
On the wave why she uncloses
  When the sun is warm and bright.

Oh, the charm of love, the beating
Of the purple pulse, the meeting,

And the magic kiss of greeting,
That upon the spirit lives;
And the tumult and unquiet,
And the yearning and the riot,
And the piquancy its fleeting
Transitory pleasure gives!

Dullard! not to know my lover,
Mine own noble Antony,
Mine own soldier, mine own rover,
Comes to-night to visit me!
Hasten, get my silver cincture,
Give my lips a brighter tincture,
Luscious lips, a lucent lincture
For my lover's malady.

Oh, the sport! the playful racing
Round the hall, each other chasing
Where the vines are interlacing,
Oh, the rapture so divine!
And the music and the ringing,
And the singing and the swinging
In the breeze so cool and bracing,
And the citron and the wine!

THE LION

Thou mighty brute, what majesty,
What strength and power immense
In thy terrific form we see,
What bold magnificence!

Thy kingship o'er the forest vast
On thy broad brow is read,
And stamped upon the royal cast
Of thy colossal head!

The fierceness of ten thousand years
Of fury, fire, and fight,
Red battle with thy would-be peers,
Is gathered in thy might!

Thy limbs as strong as knotted oaks,
Thy paws like bars of steel,
Give blows as fierce as thunder-strokes
To make a turret reel!

THE LION

The pestilence is in thy breath,
  And murder-dripping jaw;
Thy tracks lead downward unto death;
  Hell's fire is in thy maw!

Thy voice is like the battle-shout
  When bannered armies meet
And thousand lives are trampled out
  Beneath War's iron feet!

Thou movest on the mountain-side
  Like to a thunder-blast;
And o'er the forest far and wide
  The gloom of death is cast!

O Mighty One! to me thou art
  A wild, tremendous force
Like that which rends the oak apart
  When cyclones run their course!

A symbol of that Power Immense
  Which whirls the earth through space,
And veils in clouds of thunder dense
  The glory of His Face!

THE TIGER

I AM the king of the jungle black,
The king of the forest wide:
All beasts will fly from my fearful track
And deep in their caverns hide.
My kingdom bold by my power I hold,
By the weight of my cruel paws,
By mine awful ire, and the fear I inspire,
And the strength of mine iron jaws!

I stalk the buffalo through the grass,
The ox with his anvil head;
And I fling my weight like a ton of brass
On his neck, and I strike him dead.
The elephant blows his trumpet loud,
And rushes to strike me low;
But I shun the attack, and leap on his back,
And bring him down with a blow.

The fierce orang, by the devil cast
In his own terrific form,

Will fly from me as he will from the blast
Or the terrible tropic storm.
The python bold, that will crush in its fold
The wild rhinoceros white,
I charge and tear in the underwood there,
While the boar looks on in fright.

The beasts come down to the stream at dusk,
The tapir, the deer, and boar,
The mammoth huge with his dreadful tusk
And his wild, unearthly roar;
And I lie in wait with my mottled mate,
For the stag or the bison black,
And then with a leap and an awful sweep
Of my iron paw break his back.

Oh, the tiger bold fills the heart with cold
Of the leopard and mountain cat;
And his screaming fierce the breast will pierce
Of the bear with his devil's brat.
E'en the lion red, that fills with dread
The forest throughout its length,
Will shun a fight with me in the night,
So well does he know my strength!

But when we engage with furious rage,
Oh, then the volcano wakes;

And the jungle howls with our hellish growls,
  And the wood and the mountain quakes;
And the thunder fills with terror the hills,
  And the ounce and the panther fleet,
So fierce and strong is the battle long
  When the lion and the tiger meet!

With my brindled bride by my glossy side,
  I'm the king of the jungle black,
On the neck of the wild-ox red we ride,
  And the burly buffalo's back:
The pards that yell with mouth of hell,
  The leopard and wild-boar great,
Will fly with fear when the scream they hear
  Of Tiger Tom and his mate.

SAINT BERNARD TO THE BLESSED MARY

Oh! the pale silver light of a soft southern night
Is less bright than the light of her presence;
And the lay of the lark, as he scatters the dark,
Is less sweet than the laugh of her pleasance;
And her mien and the sheen
Of her eyes show the queen,
Though her garb is as rough as a peasant's.

And the gold of her hair, and the gold of her fair
And bewitchingly beautiful features,
Make of Mary the light, make of Mary the bright,
The most lissom and lovely of creatures;
And the rose of her mouth,
Like the rose of the south,
Makes her sweet lips the purest of preachers.

Oh! the forehead of pearl of this amber-haired girl,
And her eyes full as blue as a beryl,

And their long silken fringe, and her cheeks' rosy
tinge,
And her figure as straight as a ferule,
All have entered my heart
And refined every part,
And have made a life bloom that was sterile.

A diamond of blue is less perfect or true,
Is less pure than my star of the ocean;
And the smile is as bright as an alexandrite,
Of the lady that owns my devotion.
Oh, the beautiful doe
Nor the cygnet can show
So much grace as my Mary in motion.

I can see the maid now, with her low, pensive
brow,
And her round, open throat, and the jasper
Of rosy-red lips that are pressed to the tips
Of the fingers of Him who would clasp her:
The most beautiful Child,
Little Jesus the Mild,
Who is putting his arms up to grasp her.

I can hear her low voice, and my pulses rejoice
As they beat to the musical measure;

TO THE BLESSED MARY

I can see the swift blush, as the Child with a rush
Flings His arms round His beautiful treasure;
As He laughs in His glee,
While the Maiden Marie
Sweetly smileth to see the Boy's pleasure.

I can see the warm light of her eyes in the night,
As she looks at me out of the glooming;
And her young piquant face, all illumined with grace,
Sets the flowers of my heart all a-blooming;
And the scent of her hair,
Floating out on the air,
Is the violet's, the night-winds perfuming.

And I press the pink tips of her fingers to lips
That have learned to belaud her and love her;
And I thrill to the touch of her hand overmuch,
With a joy born of Heaven above her;
While the Seraphim sing,
Silver wing unto wing,
And the Cherubim round her head hover.

Oh! what is the worth of the beauties of earth
Compared unto that of my jewel?

Or what is the grace of a beautiful face
If the heart be corrupted and cruel?
I cry "fie!" on the light
Of an eye like the night,
When the life is a dark one and dual.

Give, give me the maid of the amber-bright braid,
Sweet Mary, the virginal mother:
My dove and my love, pure as Heaven above,
In the eyes of our Saviour and Brother.
Oh! the Maiden Marie
Is the true-love of me,
And I want not the love of another.

THE SEA-FIGHT OFF SANTIAGO

Out from the strait they steamed
On a Sunday morning bright,—
Four battle-ships with the iron lips
Of their guns unmuzzled for fight
And the steel plates flashing in the light:
Strait out to sea they steamed,
And their pennons behind them streamed,
As they roared and blored like a fearful blast,
And kicked up the sea into mountains fast,
While the balls all around them screamed.

Out of the bay they rushed,
A grand and imposing sight,
Their steam full on, and their flags all flushed,
And the gunners stripped for fight,
Their eyes all bright with the thunder-light.
Out swept the Infanta first,
And a shell from her turret burst,
And rose in the air with a roar and blare

And passed on the blast with a flare and glare
  Toward the Brooklyn there, for fight athirst.

But the shell, with a yell like hell,
  Of the Yankee ship flew wide,
And a shot from the Brooklyn's gunner fell
  On the Spaniard's starboard side,
  And crashed right on with a grind and gride.
  Then another followed fast
  On the battle's fearful blast,
And the sea-quake woke, 'mid flame and smoke,
And the fire like a shower of meteors broke
  On the hulk in the whirlpool cast.

Now the Yankee ships of the line,
  With a leap and a frightful yell,
Like a storm swept over the brine,
  While a tempest of shot and shell
  And of thunder-stones all around them fell.
  Then the swift Vizcaya came
  Through the surging sea of flame,
And her guns all spoke, and her fire-bolts broke
Round the Yankee cruisers wrapped in smoke —
  But her fire went wide of her aim.

Up rushed the Iowa then,
  And the terrible Oregon,

And you'd think the fire from the devil's den
In the boiling sea-trough shone,
Such a tempest broke on the Don.
Then the blazing lightnings flew
And the whirlwind louder blew,
And the cannon crashed, and the rifles flashed,
And the rapid-guns and the howits smashed
The Spaniard's ship, and his frantic crew.

While the great Vizcaya fought
With the twain her fearful fight,
The Colon swept through the gulf and sought
Through the battle-blaze and the tempest-light
To force her way, and escape by flight.
Then the guns of the Texas roared,
And the tubes of the Brooklyn poured
Such a storm of death and fire and steel
On the battle-ship as made her reel
And well-nigh sink with all on board.

On the heels of the Colon came,
With a rush, and plunge, and sweep,
The Oquendo breathing fire and flame,
As she went through the roaring deep,
Through the foaming sea with a leap:
Then a shell and a ton of steel
She flung with a thunder-peal,

And her engines screamed and her fire-bolts
streamed
O'er the seething sea, till afire it seemed,
As she flew, and showed them her heel.

But a shower of shell and shot,
From the terrible Oregon,
Struck the laboring ship in a vital spot
And blew up the treacherous Don
'Mid a blaze that far o'er the ocean shone.
O God! what a hell-fire broke,
What a fierce volcano woke,
When the roaring flames with their fangs accurst
From the stoke-hole black and the port-holes burst,
And wrapped her with thunder-smoke.

Then the guns of the Texas turned
On the Colon bounding along —
And they pounded her till her hatches burned;
And the Dons, urged on by whip and thong,
Returned our fire with a fire as strong.
Away, away o'er the main,
Ran the war-ship swift of Spain:
Like a furious blast the Iowa she passed,
With the Texas swift and the Brooklyn fast,
And the Oregon in her foaming train.

Then up to the battle came
The Indiana black,
With her fierce hontorias all aflame,
And her every Jack, all bare of back,
Yelling like men on the burning rack.
Like a sea-lion snorting fire,
Her engines throbbing with ire,
She took her place in the furious race
And gave the Colon a fearful chase,
All intent on vengeance dire.

In the midst of the tempest loud,
The Theresa, racked and rent,
Her burning hull enwrapped in a cloud
And her gunners all forespent,
Put her helm to port and landward went.
O God! what a cry of pain
Arose from the men of Spain,
When the fire from the hold wrapt the sailors bold,
And they suffered agonies all untold,
As they died in the hurricane!

The noble Vizcaya, too,
On fire abaft and before,
Though her guns were served by her gallant crew,
Had to turn her head for the shore,
Where her decks blew up with an awful roar.

Then the two torpedoes dread
From the fire of the Gloucester fled,
While a screeching shell with the panther's yell
From the frowning towers of the Texas fell
On the fury, and struck him dead.

Meantime through a shower of shot
Like a comet the Colon rushed:
The Oregon and the Brooklyn hot
In pursuit, with their guns that crushed
The Spaniard's turrets with blood all flushed.
Then the sea like a geyser boiled
While the men at the cannon moiled,
And the big guns yelled, as the Dons they shelled,
And the fight in their iron hands they held,
While the ships through the tempest toiled.

Away on the greatest race
That e'er took place on the sea,
The Colon sped with our ships in chase;
All their engines panting fearfully,
And their fire as fierce as lightnings be.
For sixty miles or more
'Mid the deep incessant roar
Of a burning mount, a volcano red,
The battle-ship on the hot race sped,
Till the Spaniard put for the shore.

St. Francis College, 1847 NEW YORK

Thus the fight was fought that day
  In the Santiago sea,
A fight that will live in fame alway
  And by ages yet to be
  Will be read triumphantly.
  All praise to the Powers that reign,
  To the God of the land and main,
Unto Sampson, too, and Schley with his crew,
Who right in the thick of the battle flew,
  And swept the sea of the ships of Spain.

HILDEBRAND

[To W. S. Wennerberg]

The man I sing whose rugged silhouette,
Whose strong incisive profile cut in jet,
Stamps him the greatest hero of his age,
Its grandest sovereign, and its foremost sage:
The man of steel, who clipped the brazen wings
Of robber-barons and of ruffian kings:
The hero bold, who, owing nought to birth,
Rose by his genius o'er the lords of earth;
Whose awful thunders shook the proudest state
And terrified the armies of the great:
The firebrand of the age, the priest whose name
Made monarchs tremble, and made despots tame:
A diplomat whose policy profound
The craft of keenest statesmen could confound;
Whose forceful character, severely great,
Made him the great dynamic of the state;
Whose wondrous faculty for government,

Had he but sought his own aggrandizement,
A second Cæsar or an Otho grand
Might make of bold, unbending Hildebrand.
An iron age demands an iron lord
To rule the lawless people with the sword;
And ne'er were times so full of anarchy
As those dark days that fashioned Gregory;
And never architect a dome so vast
Built from the debris round about him cast.
He found the world degraded by its lust,
Vice on the throne, and virtue in the dust;
A pauper people trampled on the ground,
By iron laws and social pressures bound;
A stiff nobility, whose only God
Was that all-potent one, the cruel rod;
A legislature that made laws of silk
For dukes and counts, and varlets of that ilk,
And othersome of iron and of brass
For tenants, bondmen, and the peasant class;
The church, invaded by the vavasors
Of haughty kings, who sought to give her laws;
Tyrants, who placed upon the abbot's throne
Obsequious slaves and creatures of their own,
Installed their sons in benefices rich
And cast the slain incumbents in the ditch.
The clergy, thus composed of worldly men,
Fitter to wield the sword than use the pen,

Turned from the study of supernal things
To that of losels and of roistering kings;
From priestly cares and pastoral duties fled,
And offered stones to those who cried for bread.
And when the church, too feeble to resist,
Held up to Heaven her enshackled wrist,
The runagates unclasped the murderous knife,
And threatened loud to take their mother's life.
Such were the times when Gregory was called
To free a people servilely enthralled,
Before proud kings, despotic as the Khan,
T' assert the worth and dignity of man,
To drive the lion from the wattled pen,
And give the church her liberty again;
Chase from the temple with his whip of cords
The mitred satellites of earls and lords,
Degrade the vile, the proud to castigate,
And force each monk to be a celibate;
With iron heel to stamp out simony,
And give its death to ancient witchery.
A task Herculean, the world agrees;
But in the priest was found the Hercules.
He felt himself the chosen of the Lord
To free his kingdom from the tyrant's sword,
And through the church to give its liberty
To a despised and trodden peasantry.
This having done, it was the giant's aim

A Holy League of emperies to frame,
One grand and beautiful theocracy,
Deriving life from Christianity.
This was the plan that Hildebrand designed,
The great majestic thought that filled his mind;
But satisfied that priests cannot be pure,
Where kings retain the right of 'vestiture,
The peasant-prince by one tremendous blow
The feudal system sought to overthrow,
And, waging ceaseless war with simony,
Shake the whole edifice of tyranny.
But he who would an evil age reform,
Draws on himself the lightnings of the storm,
Broadcast the dragon-teeth of hatred throws,
That spring up from the ground, ten thousand foes.
Thus Hildebrand — when with their iron clang
His fulminations through the kingdoms rang —
A furious tempest brought about his ears,
Broken and stricken as he was in years.
But he who might have hurled the bolt of war,
Whom Nature stamped an iron warrior,
Impassive stood, until the mirk and mist
Dissolved, and showed the skies of amethyst;
Unmoved, pursued his labor of reform,
Despite the rumbling thunders of a storm
That soon on his devoted head would break,

And his vast power to its foundation shake.
The German Henry, who oppressed the poor
To 'dizen and bedeck his paramour,
Who robbed the altars of their precious stones
That they might sparkle on the silver zones
Of his dark dancing girls, the priest opposed,
And all the churches in his kingdom closed.
The darkness of despair hung o'er the land,
And men in whispers said that Heaven's hand
Was raised against them. Henry with the stain
Of murder on his brow, another Cain,
Wandered o'er Germany; but no man crossed
His hand with his whom all considered lost.
Then bloodshed followed, internecine war;
And Rudolph, bold and brave a warrior
As e'er drew battle-blade, to Henry's throne
Through slaughter climbed, and made the crown
his own.
The bold usurper Gregory denounced,
But for the public weal at length pronounced
The prince the lawful lord of Germany.
Another fight was fought; but victory
This time on Henry smiled, and full of ire,
Breathing resentment and destruction dire
Toward Hildebrand, he climbed the mountain-
chain,
And led his legions into Lombard's plain,

Turned to a waste the gardens of the Po,
And shut up Gregory in Angelo.
E'en then one word from that sublime old man,
And Henry would have sheathed the ataghan.
One word,— but he who so loved liberty,
And hated vice and all iniquity,
Preferred a prison and an exile's end
To peace and freedom as a tyrant's friend;
And so the grim old Lion of the Lord —
Hunted through Italy with fire and sword —
Still true to principles severe and high,
Lay down his iron sides alone to die.
And thus a ruin, but a ruin grand
Went down amid the lightnings, Hildebrand.
He failed — but no, he thought he failed, for see
The fair results of his far policy.
A church that kings had trampled on the ground,
Her brow with Freedom's starry circle crowned,
A governmental system overthrown,
'Neath which the multitude was wont to groan,
Serfdom abolished, tyranny pulled down,
And personal equality in count and clown
Taught to the mass,— the greatest gift, I wis,
By that Titanic age bequeathed to this,—
The mass that saw in stalwart Gregory
The strongest safeguard of their liberty.
Living, he taught that character, not birth,

Alone can constitute exalted worth,
And, dying, left unto remotest time
The grand example of his life sublime:
A wonderfully bold and great career
For sages to admire and kings to fear.

NAPOLEON

[Supposed to be written ere his removal from St. Helena.]

THERE lies he cold and lifeless now,
No royal circle round his brow,
  No battle-flag before him:
No wife beside his form to weep,
No children to his side to creep,
No loving hand his grave to keep,
  Nor canopy hung o'er him:
Nay, friendless as a nameless slave,
He slumbers in his lonely grave!

There lies he low, the king of kings,
Who made of thrones his playing-things,
  And like a Man-God bore him:
There lies he now less than the bird
That in the scraggy hedge is heard,
Yea, less than yon blind bat that whirred,
  And flew this minute o'er him:
The hands that smote the Cæsar's crest
Now folded, childlike, on his breast!

Where are his myriad men of war,
Where are the legions wont to draw
  The battle-blade before him?
Where are the grisly grenadiers
Who hailed him with their iron tears,
And, rushing on with thunder-cheers,
  Beat Charles, and trampled o'er him?
Was there not one to follow him,
And close his eyes when they grew dim?

Where are the guns of Lodi red,
Of Wagram, covered with the dead,
  Where he so proudly bore him?
Marengo's cannon, where are they,
The howitzers of Arcolay,
Of murderous Jena's dreadful day,
  Where glory's sun burst o'er him?
Is there not one to thunder o'er
His corse on Helen's rocky shore?

When first the conquering king I saw,
He hurled the blazing bolt of war,
  His proud flag flying o'er him;
And bombs were bursting in the air,
And in the cannon's smoke and glare
A million men were battling there,
  Upon the plain before him;

And when his battle-flags were furled,
He stood, the master of the world.

When last I saw that conquering king,
He was a most abandoned thing,
  His army flying before him:
His cannon spiked or overthrown,
His carriages to pieces blown,
His guard cut down, like barley mown,
  His horsemen riding o'er them;
And he, a wretch whom no one knew,
Fled from the field of Waterloo.

Poor fallen king! Poor tool of Fate,
By some misnomer called The Great,
  Sleep on in marble slumber:
Thou hast fulfilled thy destiny.
A human vulture, God sent thee
The world's great scavenger to be,
  To cleanse it of its scumber;
And having done thy work, O Pride,
He flung thee, like a stick, aside!

DEBORAH SAMPSON

[A Massachusetts woman who fought in the Revolution.]

Only a woman as fair as the fairest,
Only a girl with a timid blue eye;
But the heart in her breast was bold as the best,
And her spirit was brave as the bravest and rarest
Of all who went forth for their country to die!

When the guns their songs of liberty thundered,
And Liberty's flag all its folds unfurled,
And in field and in fen our raw minute-men
Fought Freedom's battle, and all Europe wondered,
For the fame of the fight filled all the world,

This high-souled woman left lover and mother,
And, donning the buff of the rebel bold,
She shouldered her gun and she marched in the sun,
And she marched in the rain by the side of her brother,
And hurried away where the battle-smoke rolled.

DEBORAH SAMPSON

Away she went to the front of the battle,
Where the storm-cloud burst and the lightning flashed;
And on through the gale of a terrible hail,
'Mid the gloom, and the boom, and the roar and the rattle,
In the far fore-front of the fray she dashed.

When Washington crossed the Delaware River,
And his freezing soldiers died at his side,
Then her fortitude shone; for she struggled on,
And battled with never a shiver nor quiver,
Though weak men fainted and strong men cried.

At Valley Forge, where the troops left behind them
Their terrible foot-prints of bloody red,
And they marched through the sleet with their bleeding feet,
And blizzards so fierce as almost to blind them,
This heroine tramped by their side and bled.

Only a woman, but never Crusader,
Never was warrior braver than she,
Who shouldered her gun in the rain and the sun,
And went out to meet the insulting invader,
And beat him, and drove him back into the sea!

LILAC TIME

Winds of Heaven blowing, flowers of Heaven growing,
Daffodils and jonquils glowing in the sun,
Squirrels in the hedges, serpents in the sedges,
Laughing waters flashing and splashing in the run.

Apple-blossoms glowing,— one would think 'twas snowing,
For the trees are mantled in a robe of white,—
And the meadows golden with the kingcup olden
Fill the heart with joyance, buoyance and delight.

Merry spinks above me, bobolinks that love me,
Pipe and sing and whistle gaily all the day;
And the golden robin, in the grasses bobbing,
Fills the waving woods with music of the May.

LILAC TIME

Oh, the song of blackmacks, and the smell of lilacs,
And the sassafrases sweet as rosemary,
And the blossoms-cherry make the country merry,
Make the land awake to love and melody!

Oh, it's Heaven living when the buds are giving,
Giving all their musk and magic to the breeze;
When the birds are trilling, all the forest filling
With their song all day long of the sunset-seas!

And I thank Thee, Jesus, for these scented breezes,
Thank Thee, oh, so kindly, for so sweet a day;
For the waters flowing, and the blossoms blowing,
And the wondrous magic of the mystic May.

HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

His life was one of meditation deep,
Profoundest thought upon the Primal Force,
The Master-Worker, the Eternal Source
Of all the cosmic energies that keep
The systems in the orbs through which they sweep,
The planets in their ordinated course:
That Power whose stern decretals doth divorce
The vale of vice from virtue's sunlit steep.

In brooding silence like a god he sate,
Eternal wisdom sitting on his brow,
His visage furrowed with the lines of fate,
A stone enigma, questioning the How,
The Why and Wherefore of the things that be,
And find their centre in the Deity.

Composed in intramental calm he sate,
Nor let the great perfervid world disturb
His placid soul, which nothing could perturb,
So high it stood, so strong, and so sedate.

Within himself he shrank to meditate
On transient man, the brother of the herb,
And on man's passions, which to check and curb
Is his prime Duty, foreordained of Fate.

The mind of Plato and the soul of Paul
He had, this wondrous wizard of the Nile;
A heart to know and love the Lord of all,
A spirit that no soilure could defile:
A Christian heart within a Pagan breast,
Two-thirds an angel, and a clod the rest.

A seer more sage than thoughtful Socrates,
While others floundered on an unknown sea
Of doubt, despair, and dark uncertainty,
He nobly dared explore the mysteries
Of life and light, the twin eternities;
Taught God, existent in a Trinity,
Declared the spirit's immortality,
And gleaned the lore of latest centuries.

Whence did he gather it, inquires the mind?
Learning so recondite, so varied, too:
Whence did he gather in an age so blind
Such wisdom as Egyptian Hermes knew?
Was it derived of self,— or was his lore
Revealed of Heaven, as in the days of yore?

SIGHING FOR SUMMER

Oh for the rhythm, the rhyme and the chime
Of the bells in Fairyland ringing;
Of the song at prime, in the fragrant thyme,
Of the blackbird merrily singing!

And oh for the rose in the green perclose,
The pippin, the peach, and the cherry;
For the peppermint where the sunbeams glint,
And the rippling rivulets merry!

For the silvern gleam in the beautiful stream
Of the trout and the grayling glancing;
Or the bream that glitters like gold in the beam
Of the sun on the waters dancing!

For the woods of dusk, and the winds of musk
With a hint of the citron in them;
The thrush in the grass, and the sassafras,
And lilies with lassies to win them!

SIGHING FOR SUMMER

Oh for a sight of the red-bird bright,
And the cardinal's warm vermilion;
For the golden flight, in the flashing light,
Of the finch to his green pavilion!

For the whippoorwill on the twilight hill
Where the sumac sprays are plumy,
And the tender song when the shadows are long
Of the girls in the garden bloomy!

A sigh for the sky of sweet July
And the summer's glamour and glimmer,
Of the lazy seas and lavender leas
And the summer-time's shine and shimmer!

THE ORIOLE

A FLASH of light and a whir of wings,
  A gleam of gold and a blush of red:
And adown the gloom like a star it sped;
Adown the green and the trees atween,
  Like a feathery fire it swiftly fled,
With an ebon back, and a golden throat,
And a palpitant, pulsatile, passionate note,
That out on the air like a bubble doth float
Or a golden girl in a golden boat.

A gorgeous creature, a globe of fire,
  A thing all splendor and love and light;
A robin begot in the rainbow bright
Or the western skies when the sunset dyes
  The wings of the birds that pass in flight
Through the ruby gates, and the portals wide,
Till tipped with vermilion, and dipped in a tide
Of purple and gold, they glimmer and glide
Through the sky, as bright as a bloomy bride.

THE ORIOLE

An orange-musk in the twinkling dusk;
  A topaz throbbing with golden fire;
Sweet music shaken from Heaven's lyre,
And turned in the night to crimson bright,
  And gold like the yellow light of a pyre,—
A glimmering, shimmering, beautiful thing,
With a voice like a pearl in a simmering spring,
A diamond flitting on glittering wing,
That ever of Heaven doth heavenly sing.

THE WILD HORSES OF THE PAMPAS

Out on the prairies there rolling away,
Rolling in billows like waves on the bay,
Browsing and nibbling the delicate green
Of the pampas, a troop of wild horses are seen.
Beautiful fellows as wild as can be,
Wild as the surf and the surge of the sea,
With rivery manes, and eyes shot with fire,
And limbs whose tendons and cords are of wire.
A stallion their leader, a powerful black,
Battle scars thick on his flanks and his back,
His neck a massive one, glossy and proud,
His eye like lightning licking the cloud.
In sooth, they make a magnificent sight,
That herd of horses, fourscore of them quite.
Horses that never knew bridle nor rein,
That ne'er felt the lash nor the rowel's pain,
Ramping and romping at will on the plain.

But hark! the thunder of hundreds of hoofs
Like a storm beating hard on a village's roofs
Is heard in the west, and a roar like the sea
When the tempest lashes it furiously.
Then pricking their ears, with a look of surprise
And of anger perchance in their great rolling eyes,
They snuff at the winds that come over the plain,
Their muscles all bunching and tense every vein.
Then they snort with alarm, while the lightning of fight
Flashes out of their eyes that are all blazing bright.
Then wheeling as if by a bugle's command,
Each steed in a trice takes his place in the band,
The strong ones before and the weaker behind,
While the strangers rush o'er the plain like the wind.
Over the pampas they gallop and dash
As if every courser was urged with the lash,—
A hundred swift horses all rushing along
With the rumble and blore of buffaloes strong.
But, lo! on a sudden the dark flying mass
Bring up at a halt in the deep waving grass,
And, lifting their long slender necks high in air,
With a look of surprise at the other ones stare.
Then they snort defiance, and, prancing around,
Soon form into ranks on the broad battle-ground.
Like a cyclone that tears o'er the prairie they dash,
Rush over the plain with a clatter and crash,—

The two rival armies, the stallions in front,
Ever eager to bear battle's terrible brunt.
Faster and faster and harder they go,
Like tigers or lions leaping after the foe.
Their eyes all as red as the red thunder-light,
And their galloping hoofs all too eager to smite.
Like thunder-clouds big with the tempest they meet,
And battle with tushes and furious feet,
Half of them thrown by the shock to the plain,
Some of them never to rise thence again.
O Heaven, what a sight! What a tempest of blows!
What a thunder-gust rages around the fierce foes!
What shrieking and screaming like demons in pain
As the horses battle with might and with main,
And the terrible hoofs beat out many a brain!
They kick and they bite; they roll and they rear,
They rush and they plunge, and scream in their fear;
The blood flowing freely from many a flank,
And turning to crimson the grasses and brank.
Never wolves on the shore of the frozen seas
Were so fierce, so cruel, so savage as these;
Never the panther nor jaguar waged
A bloodier battle, nor angrier raged,
Than those furious steeds, as they bite and smite,
And tear up the plain in their terrible fight.

But see! now the leaders, two thunderbolts, meet
And battle and batter with teeth and with feet,
Wheel and career round each other and pound,
And pummel and strike till they fall to the ground.
But, ah! they are up again, screaming with rage,
And again with a rush and a crash they engage,
Snorting and shrieking with passion and pain
And striking and beating with might and with main:
Till one of them falls on the ripple-grass dead,
The black having shattered and crushed in his head.
Then, stricken with panic, the strange horses flee
With the speed of the wind o'er the green, grassy sea;
The maimed left behind to the rage of their foes,
Who batter their skulls with their terrible blows;
Then sink on the pampas, all reeking and wet
With blood and with foam, with froth and with sweat,
Panting and blowing and gasping for breath,
The living ones close by their comrades in death.
Such are the battles are fought when they meet,
The steeds of the pampas, so fiery and fleet;
Steeds that are shod with the lightning and strong
As the thunder that rumbles and rattles along.

THE FLOATING GARDENS OF MEXICO

The Chalco Lake, oh, the Chalco Lake
With its murmurous waves of melted pearls,
And its lilies of living gold that make
A screen for the black-eyed water-girls.
Oh, the Chalco Lake with its fringe of palms,
Its gentle zephyrs and golden calms,
Its cinnamon breath and Gilead-balms,
And its skies as blue as blue can be,
Oh, the Chalco Lake is the place for me!

Oh, the Chalco Lake with its floating isles,—
Shall I e'er forget that day of days,
When over the wave where sunlight smiles,
The year around through a golden haze,
We came at last to the isles that float
And glide and glance like a dancing boat,
To the music soft of the cushat's note:
We came to the new Hesperides,
With their banks of bloom and acacia-trees!

FLOATING GARDENS OF MEXICO

The floating gardens of Mexico,
With their scarlet beds of callirhoe,
The rose-trees scenting the winds that blow,
The asphodel and eurydice;
And the humming-birds with their purple wings,
The doves with their iridescent rings,
And the gorgeous prince of all gorgeous things,
The bright flamingo in scarlet dressed,
Like sunset clouds in the crimson west!

And the señoritas in white simars,
Among the trees in the purple dusk,
Singing to sound of their sweet guitars,
Songs that fill all the air with musk;
And glow-worms gleaming like drops of glass,
And fire-flies flashing on trees and grass,
With eyes of gold and with backs of brass,
An Eden make of those isles of flowers,
Those smiling islands of birds and bowers.

Oh, what were life in those flowery isles,
With those I love in the rosy east!
A golden dream, with their songs and smiles,
A dance by day and by night a feast.
And lying there amid roses red,
With blue beneath and the blue o'erhead,
To the bustling world and its sorrows dead,

'Tis little we'd reck of its care and crime,
And little we'd mind the flight of time!

Oh, floating, floating ever along,
  Ever along on the inland sea,
In music and mirth, and light and song,
  And romances out of Araby.
Why care should we for the world without,
With its noise and strife and battle-shout,
Its dance and revel, and mask and rout? —
In sweet oblivion of all beside,
We'd drift along on the summer tide.

An artist striving for golden fame,
  A soldier battling to win a crown,
In those sweet islands with flowers aflame
  Might laugh at the tinselled toy, renown.
For who that ever beheld those isles
Floating over the water for miles
Would care for Fortune's favors or smiles;
Oh, who that has got the pearl in his hand
Would look for the pearl that's lost in the sand?

O floating gardens of Mexico,
  I would that I were among you now,
To lay my head where your violets blow,
  And feel your redolent winds on my brow,

FLOATING GARDENS OF MEXICO

I would I were where the gold-thread grows,
Where the wave with its murmurous music flows,
And each hour is a flower, a fragrant rose,
That falling away from the life-tree lies
Like light on the grass, and in perfume dies!

A SONG OF THE SEA

Oh, sing a song to me of the foaming, fuming sea
The rumble and the tumble as it thunders on the shore,
The passionate unrest of its mighty heaving breast,
The battle and the brattle, the bluster and the blore!

And the long and mighty sweep of the billows on the deep,
The boom and gloom, and frothy spume that flies before the blast,
The lions of the sea, that, roaring fearfully,
Mistake the rocks for feeding flocks, and leap on them at last.

Oh, sing to stir the blood of the mighty moving flood,
The rushing of the waters, the turbulence and fume;

A SONG OF THE SEA

The vast tremendous power, the rolling clouds that lower,
The wild torrential tumult, the tempest and the gloom.

For the dark and stormy sea has a nameless charm for me,
There's music in its motion, there is magic in its roar.
There's beauty in its gloom and grandeur in its boom,
And majesty and terror in its blore upon the shore!

And I could stand all day, and watch the flying spray,
And mark the mighty march of mountain waves along
Of billows battle-black, bearing thunder on their back,
All charging like a thousand horse in line of battle strong.

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

O Beauty, Beauty, God's immortal daughter,
The fairest efflorescence of His love:
Thy smile is like the light of laughing water;
Thy shade, the glory of the stars above.
Thou art the magic one, the golden dove,
That, moving on wide wings of lambent light,
Fillest with ravishment the cosmic grove,
And with thy splendor and effulgence bright
Enrapturest the heart, concentred into sight!

Thou art the world's sultana, and its wonder,
The queenly conqueror of conquering kings:
Strong in thy loveliness as tropic thunder
When on the storm the living lightning springs,
And all the world with its wild laughter rings.
Thou art the rising sun, and men adore thee,
And on thy shrine heap up all precious things:
Thou art the world's desire: men bow before thee,
While Heaven itself in rapture bends Him o'er thee!

In many forms — for thou art pluri-present —
Thou charmest men,— in foam-bell and in flower,
In star and moon, in cresset, and in crescent,
In versi-colored warblers of the bower,
And in the glitterant gems of summer's shower
But never yet, O Loveliness transcendent,
A fairer form with favors thou didst dower
Than Hers, whose star fore'er in the ascendent
Shines o'er the troubled sea, our beacon-light transplendent.

O Mary Maiden, all that's soft and tender
Of love and light, and gentleness and grace,
And all that's loveliest of gloom and splendor,
Meets in the magic music of thy face;
Beams in thine eye, wherein the soul may trace
That purity, which as the priceless gem
Of Christian woman holds the proudest place;
Gleams on thy brow, and with a diadem
Crowns thee, O Royal Rose, of David's royal stem

Purer than crystal in its native mountains,
Than coral-combs beneath the placid sea,
Pure as the diamond-dew of flashing fountains,
Or sunlight on the lily of the lea,
Or pearl-pink clouds that sail the heavens free,

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

Thou shinest forth, the diamond without flaw,
  The star with naught to dim its brilliancy,
O brightest beauty that the skies e'er saw
Since they began their march in God's eternal law

O Woman, made of music and of musk,
  And all sweet things, that sweeter seem in thee,
O Lady of the diamond eyes of dusk,
  And look of love, and queenly dignity,
  Attempered by thy maiden modesty,
Thou comest smiling from the Orient,
  Breathing of balsam out of Araby,
Thou comest up, like some bright angel sent,
To give to human deeds a loftier intent!

O golden Rose, O sunny light of May,
  No words though words were made of amethyst,
And pearls and opals where the colors play,
  And chrysolite as ruby red as cist,
  No words though they had golden tongues, I
    wist,
And though they spoke in music murmuring,
  Can shadow forth the loveliness unkissed
Of thy fair face, the spirit mirroring
Of spirits loveliest save His, our Lord and King!

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

O House of gold in which the Christ-child dwelt,
How beautiful a temple thou must be!
How pure those virgin lips the Christ-child felt,
When he upturned His angel face to thee,
And laughed and prattled in thine arms with glee!
O Virgin Beautiful, how pure thine eyes,
Bright with the chrysoberyl's brilliancy,
That dared to look into the blue purprise
Of His whose purity was purer than the skies!

O Mary, garden gay of red-lipped roses,
O Vale, with bird-voice music most divine,
O Paradise where every joy reposes
On flowery banks as red as almandine,
Fair fount of diamonds in whose waters shine
The sparkling summer light of golden grace,
O Tree of cinnamon, whose perfume fine
With redolence fills God's own dwelling-place,
Thy breath of balsam breathe upon my burning face!

Thy loveliness like golden music thrills me,
Like light illumines me, and glorifies:
Thy beauty with the wine of rapture fills me,
Enchanting me while yet it purifies,
And lifts my spirit to the over-skies.

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

Oh, deep within my heart of hearts, I feel
  The splendor of thy wonderful dark eyes,
Before whose light the fainting senses reel,
And o'er the trembling soul ecstatic visions steal.

O Morning Star, O Tower of Ivory,
  O Jewel flashing with the brilliant light,
The splendor of thine angel chastity,
  Turn thou the glory of thy beauty bright,
  The dazzling radiance of thy brow bedight
With gold and hyacinth and diamond,
  Upon me, Lady of the lilies white;
Touch thou my heart with thine angelic wand,
And living streams will gush, O Mother fair and
    fond!

Give me to be thy docile child, Marie,
  Give me to love thee with the love of truth:
Give me to know thy crystal purity,
  O Queen of Beauty, brilliant with the blooth
  And dazzling splendor of eternal youth!
Speak to my heart in accents sweet and low:
  Oh, whisper kindly words of golden sooth,
Speak as thou spakest in the long ago,
To Jesus, Mother mine, O Maiden pure as snow!

LIBRARY
NEW YORK

Fill thou my heart with mystic music, Mother,
Music that takes its silver touch from thee:
Fill me with tenderness for Christ our brother,
For Christ thy Son, mirificent Marie,
O Light of stars along the flashing sea.
For thou canst give to those that love, adore thee
And keep their spirits pure and white of blee,
Thy children sweet who kneel them down before thee,
Joy like to theirs on high who hover round and o'er thee.

Give me to drink at the pellucid fountain
The golden waters of immortal youth:
Give me to climb the rugged iron mountain
Where stands the Temple of Eternal Truth,
Of Right, triumphant in her might and blooth.
For thou art Wisdom, crowned and constellated
And clothed with power strong as death in sooth;
And thou canst give to souls illuminated
Love far beyond the stent of mind to matter mated.

And now, in lieu of fresh and full-blown roses
And garlands sweet as heavenly lavender,
In lieu of silver song with silver closes,
Song full of incense and the breath of myrrh,
And all those charms that make the pulses stir,

THE VIRGIN MOTHER

Accept these humble strains, O Lady sweet;
And if they be not smooth as minever,
But crude, inconsonant, and incomplete,
Accept them for the heart, I lay me at thy feet!

THE DEEP GREEN WOODS

Art may boast her pictures, boast her pearly palace,
Boast her marble statues perfect in each part,
Boast her sculptured bronzes and her jewelled chalice;
But, if I have Nature, care I not for Art.

Oh, I sick and weary of divine Apollos,
Cupids cut in marver, Junos wrought in brass:
And I'd rather list to the twitter of the swallows,
Watch the bobolincolns hopping in the grass.

Oh, the fragrant woodland! Oh, the sombre forest!
How I love to wander and ponder in its ways!
How I love to listen to the cuckoo chorist,
Singing in the poplars songs of other days!

Oh, the balmy breezes, breathing musk of Heaven,
And the blush of blossoms blooming by the way;

And the golden robins darting round like levin,
How they fill my heart with the music of the May!

Tell me not of Florence with its marble treasures,
Tell me not of Rome with its vast cathedral piles,
Tell me not of Paris with its wealth of pleasures,
Rather give me May-time in these forest aisles.

With no eye to watch me but the One above me,
With no one beside me but His presence there,
With no one but God and the wild-wood birds to love me,
Here in this old forest I could dwell fore'er.

Here amid the grasses, in the woodland passes,
I could lay me down and dream my life away;
Listening to the rhyming and the silver chiming
Of the bells, distant bells, ringing all the day.

Oh, the woods, the green woods stretching all around me,
How I love the gloom and glimmer of the trees;
How I love the birds and flowers that surround me,
And the hum in the lum of the belted bees!

St. Francis
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ME

THE VIKING'S DAUGHTER

SHE pauses beside the water,
A vision of angel grace,
The sea-king's beautiful daughter,
The child of a royal race;
And the wanton winds that sought her
Grow faint in her soft embrace,
For the Queen of Love has brought her
The charms of a fairy face.

She stands by the sombre ocean,
As lovely as she, of yore,
The mother of sweet Erotion,
The nymph that the billows bore
And swept with musical motion
To the silver-sanded shore.
She speaks, and the waves' devotion
Is seen, for they cease to roar.

She speaks, and the winds that dying
For love of her luscious lips
Are charmed like the flower sighing
At touch of her finger-tips;
And the sea-mews, calling and crying
As the wing in the water dips,
At the musical sounds come flying
To the shore where the sunshine slips,

In the golden tresses that cover
Shoulders that gleam and that glow,
And a brow like heaven above her,
A brow as pure as the snow;
And the sea-gulls circle and hover
Round the beautiful maid below,
For they, like the sunbeams, love her,
The waves and the winds that blow.

O Queen of the golden tresses,
O maid of the faultless face,
O Bride that thy robe caresses
In its lines of gliding grace,
Thrice blessed the prince who possesses
Thy love, as free from all trace
Of stain as the jewelled jesses
Of the sun's high dwelling-place!

Yes, happy whom thy decision
  Makes lord of thy beauty bright,
Thy beauty like to a vision
  Of the starry Queen of Night;
Thy love that knows no division,
  Love pure as the foam-bells white,
For life is a field Elysian
  To the heart thy smiles requite.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TRUST

THOUGH the skies be black above me, and though lightnings hurtle round,
Still I trust me in the keeping of the Lord;
And although the road be lonely, and though evil shapes abound,
God above shall be my armor and my sword.

Though, like Sidrach and his brothers, in the furnace I be cast,
Still I will not blanch, but call upon His name;
And the God that saved the Hebrews from the hot breath of the blast
Will give ear to me, and quench the roaring flame.

Though oppression be my portion, and the persecutor's scourge,
Still in God, the potent King, will I confide;

And the Lord that led the Hebrews through the Red Sea's rolling surge
Will lead me, I know, through sorrow's bitter tide.

Though, like Job, I be afflicted and be mocked at by mine own,—
Yea, though all the fickle world abandon me,—
Still I will not grow disheartened nor beneath my burden groan
If, O Lord of light and love, I still have Thee!

For, O Lord, if I have Thee, what are sorrows here below?
What is pain compared with happiness above?
In Thy smile I will forget them, all the wickedness and woe,
And the sunshine and the music of Thy love!

Then be Thy trust, my spirit, in the goodness of the Lord,
Who will lead thee yet into the Promised Land:
Be His beauty thy protection, and His glory be thy sword,
And thine only strength the shadow of His hand.

ON AN AUTUMN LEAF FOUND IN A BOOK

Forgive the teardrops falling
On the yellow leaflet sere,
I hear in the darkness calling
A voice that I used to hear.
I see a face of sweetness
In the fitful firelight there,
A form of rich completeness,
And a lady's graceful air.
But pale and cold
'Neath hair of gold
Is the marble forehead I behold.

The gold and crimson lingers
On the leaflet dry and bare;
But, oh, how changed the fingers
That silently placed it there!

ON AN AUTUMN LEAF IN A BOOK

Where now the look of splendor
  On that truthful, sweet, dear face,
The liquid eyes so tender,
  And the airy, matchless grace?
    Ah! still and cold
    Within the mould
Lies the lady fair with hair of gold!

Alas for the useless sighing,
  Alas for the tears are shed!
Alas for the hapless dying,
  And the chill and mouldering dead!
Alas for the hopeless living,
  For those that weep and yearn;
And for death, the unforgiving,
  From whose bourne there's no return!
    Alas for life
    With sorrows rife,
An empty hour of noise and strife!

Ah, never a bell is ringing,
  But a patient sufferer dies;
Ah, never a child is singing,
  But another faintly cries!
Ah, never a dawn is breaking
  O'er the dark and sullen sea,

ON AN AUTUMN LEAF IN A BOOK

But widowed hearts are aching,
Some eyes weep silently.
There is no joy
Without alloy,
No flower that frost will not destroy.

DANTE

Gaze on that face, that pitiless, cold face,
Chiselled in granite, hardest of the hills;
That visage grim, wherein the eye may trace
Records of Ætna fires, and hate that kills;
That grim, stern countenance, whereon is graved,
In deep, incisive lines, a tragedy
As dark as his who erst Jehovah braved,
And fell, condemned for all eternity.

Mark the thin lips, that curve and curl with scorn,
The iron lips, as silent as the tomb,
The haggard look, remorseful and forlorn,
The sunken cheeks, and beetling brow of gloom,
And note those eyes, those deep-set, ferret eyes
That seem to pierce the Future's mystery,
And, peering far beyond the under-skies,
Fix their stern look upon Infinity.

DANTE

The Sphinx that looks with solemn, stony gaze
  Across the desert world of shifting sand,
And locks the secrets of all ancient days
  Within its awful lips in silence grand,
The sombre Sphinx with all its mystery
  Is not more mystic, saturnine, and glum
Than this dark face that looks disdainfully
  On all the world of men that go and come.

The Judge of hell, the judge the pagans drew,
  The grim, inexorable god who sate
Girded with thunder, and ruled Hades' crew,
  Glowering upon the damned with eyes of hate,
The frowning judge of the infernal pit
  Had not so dark, so stern and gaunt a face
As this man, looking out with thunder-lit
  And piercing eyes into the realms of space.

O'erweening pride, and spleenish discontent,
  Sorrow, despair, and disappointment keen,
Supreme contempt of all the world, are blent
  In this strong face, this lofty, noble mien.
Long years of bitter banishment are writ
  In trenchant lines upon this visage lean;
And abnegation stern is stamped on it,
  And firm, abiding faith in the unseen.

DANTE

It is the grim, hard face of Hildebrand,
The eagle beak, the conqueror's firm jaw,
The lofty, Roman look that spake command,
The iron lips, that make the iron law.
Yet there is somewhat, too, of tenderness
And sensibility, most exquisite,
In that torque countenance, wherein distress
Is read as on an oak-tree, thunder-split.

Those are the eyes, the strong, unblasted eyes
That braved the searing flames of hell's abyss,
And, mounting upward to the over-skies,
Undazzled gazed upon the Halls of Bliss.
And even now they seem with baleful glare
To look upon those scenes of happiness,
To enter which the poet may not dare,
Since Fate has branded him with wretchedness.

Here on this brow, as on a monument,
Is graved the history of human life,
The hope, the love, the doubt and discontent,
The pride, despair, the tumult and the strife.
Here on this old, illuminated scroll
Is writ the vanity of earthly things,
The struggle of a mighty, eagle soul,
That fain would rise upon its well-clipped wings.

DANTE

Come, come away, leave Dante to his woe,
  Leave him — the greatest mind of Italy —
To curse the fickleness of things below,
  The world's unrest and instability.
Leave him alone, to brood upon his fate,
  To think that Nature made the man a King,
But Fortune drove him from his high estate,
  A most despondent, abject, wretched thing.

Come, come away, and let the curtain fall
  Upon this picture of as great a man
As ever trod upon this earthly ball
  Since through his course of conquest Cæsar ran.
His story is the story of a mind
  Too vast, colossal, for this narrow world
In which it would not, could not be confined,
  And, therefore, star-like, from its throne was hurled.

THE MUSE OF POETRY

Oh, but she is beautiful,
And, oh, but she is fair!
A white rose in her bosom
And a red rose in her hair;
The crimson of the peach-bloom
Upon her cheeks of musk;
The splendor of the stars in
Her eyes as dark as dusk.

Oh, but she is lissom,
And, oh, but she is sweet!
With sunlight shining in her face
And flowers at her feet;
Ruby-red the lips of her;
Black her eyes as sloe.
Oh, but she is graceful as
The slender snow-white doe

THE MUSE OF POETRY

Oh, but she is lovable,
  Winsome as can be!
Music on her crimson lips
  And laughter light and free;
Glory in her golden face
  And gladness in her eyes;
Beauty in the soul of her
  Like starlight in the skies.

All around her fly the birds,
  Greeting her with song;
Singing of the rainbow bright
  All the summer long.
All around her blossom flowers,
  The rose and lily white;
For she is kinder, sweeter,
  Than the sweet September light.

Glory of the firmament,
  Sunlight of the earth;
Best of all that's beautiful
  In music and in earth;
Fragrance of the eglantine,
  Freshness of the breeze;
Oh, but she is heaven-sent,
  To give to men heart's ease!

INDIAN SUMMER

Now the winding ways are yellow
With the waving golden-rod;
And the thrushes in the brushes
Chant a pæan of praise to God,—
Singing, singing in the sun
Shining on the rill and run.
And the veery, ever cheery,
Sings of days now dead and done.

Now the royal purple aster
Beautifies the banks and braes,
And the mellow apples yellow
Glimmer in the golden haze.
Bluer, bluer are the skies
Than a maiden's violet eyes.
And the sunny bee, with honey,
Through the dreamy sunlight flies.

INDIAN SUMMER

Bright the sumach plumes are burning,
  And the leaves are turning gold.
And the river, with a shiver,
  Gives a hint of coming cold.
Reaping, reaping in the fields,
  Gather they the golden yields;
While the hayers up in layers
  Pile the grasses in the bields.

IN DARK DECEMBER

Oh, for the beauty that's faded and fled,—
  Faded and fled, and forever!
Oh, for the blush and the flush of the rose,
The song of the finch where the rivulet flows,
The smell of magnolia-buds whiter than snows,
  And the face that will come to me never!

Oh, for the splendor of suns that were red,
  But are dead in the darkness forever!
Oh, for the bells that were heaven to hear,
That filled with the music of silver the ear,
When life was a diamond that now is a tear,
  And friends were too firm to dissever!

Oh, for the roseal hopes that are dead,
  Shattered and scattered forever!
Oh, for the glories are faded away,
Stars that receded with rise of the day;
Promises bright as the ships in the bay,
  But were idle as if they were never!

IN DARK DECEMBER

Life is a garden of roses, all red
  For some, that are fortunate ever;
But it's a battle, a bitter one, too,
Unto the many, the tried and the true,
Pure as the foam-bells out there on the blue;
  And, ah, it will better be never.

MAPLE-SUGAR TIME

Oh, these are the days when the woodland ways
With the forester's axe are ringing,
And the bluebird bold, in the clear air cold,
Of the lucent syrup is singing.

For these are the days when the sun's warm rays
Set the sap in the maple flowing,
And the woods are bright with snow-drifts white,
And the roseal firelight glowing.

For it's sugar time, maple-sugar time,
And the men on the trees are tapping;
And the birds reply on the birches high
To the rhyme of their rhythmic rapping.

Oh, the laugh and cheer in the strong young year,
When the sap in the pails is dripping,
And the golden glow of the fire on the snow,
And the nights, so frosty and nipping!

MAPLE-SUGAR TIME

Oh, the feathered flocks, and the patient ox,
With the cumbersome sledge behind him;
The track of the fox leading over the rocks,
And the lads all alert to find him!

Ah, these merry days by the camp-fire's blaze,
When the toilers cease from their droiling,
And stories are told in the crisp air cold
While the monster kettles are boiling!

Weird legends and long of the red wolf strong,
And the fight of the bear and the beagle;
And the monster snake that lurks in the lake,
And the wonderful pearl-white eagle.

Oh, the hearty boys, I can hear their noise,
And can see their bright eyes glisten,
In the fires that glow in the ruddy snow,
As they sit on the logs and listen!

And, though far away in the city gay,
My heart is aback in the brushes,
Where the axes ring and the woodmen sing,
And the sap from the maple gushes.

A SONG OF THE IRON LIONS

Sing me no song of the golden guitar,
  Sing me no lorn lover's story;
But sing of the gun as it flames in the sun
  And peals out a pæan of glory!

Sing me a song, and, oh, let it be strong
  Of the musketry's clatter and rattle,
Of the terrible flash and the thunderous crash
  And the wind and the whirlwind of battle.

Sing of the gleaming of steel in the sun
  And the flaming and flapping of banners:
Of the battle-smoke black, and the clangor and crack —
  And the battlefield's barbarous manners.

Sing me a song of the neighing of steeds
  And the dashing and rushing through thunder,
Of the massing of hordes and the flashing of swords,
  And the serried ranks riven in sunder.

A SONG OF THE IRON LIONS

Of the war-trumpet sing with its jubilant ring,
And the mortar's demoniac screaming,
And the trample and rush, and the flash and the flush
Of our flag in the battle-front streaming.

For our soldiers are slain, and their blood on the plain
Calls out for revenge to high Heaven;
And we'll wash out the stain in the battle's black rain
And the battle-cloud's terrible levin.

TWENTY YEARS

At twenty years the heart is like the blossoming
of Spring
The blood is like the rushing of the rills;
And life is like a rainbow with its iridescent ring
As it lies like a halo on the hills.

At twenty years this world of ours is Paradise indeed:
There's a song-sparrow singing in each tree:
There's a pathway of primroses in every dewy
mead
Where the sunshine is sleeping dreamily.

Oh, at twenty years a woman never knows an ache
or pain,
And a man is like a vigorous young oak
That is nurtured by the sunshine, and is nourished
by the rain,
And is sheltered from the thunder-light's stroke.

TWENTY YEARS

At twenty years the cheek is red, the step is light and free,
There's never in the world a cark or care;
And labor in the meadow or the mill, as it may be,
We never tire nor feel the load we bear.

At twenty years the heart retains its love for fellow-men
And never knows suspicion nor mistrust;
And the feelings are as fresh as the wild-rose in the glen,
For the soul is yet a stranger to lust.

At twenty years the eyes are clear and brilliant as a star,
The mind is like a mountain eagle strong:
The heart is full of hope like a vessel from afar
That is homeward gayly sailing along.

At twenty years we still believe in everything that's good
And square our life to duty and to right,
And have a lofty sense of love and truth and womanhood,
And keep our spirits beautiful and bright.

TWENTY YEARS

The peasant-boy at twenty years is noble as a king,
  The peasant girl is every inch a queen;
For happiness is royal, and will make the meanest thing
  As noble as the loftiest, I ween.

At twenty years a lively lad will run a race with death,
  And leave the grim hyena far behind;
Or make the romping loomgale stop to catch its panting breath,
  For its swift feet are faster than the wind.

O twenty years! O twenty years! how beautiful you are,
  As you stand like the sun on the hills!
Your beauty is the beauty of the angels in the star,
  And your music is the music of the rills!

O twenty years! How many kings would lay the crown aside,
  How many merchant princes give their gold,
If but once again with thee on the river they could glide,
  Or with thee walk again upon the wold!

THE NEW-MADE GRAVE

Out there under the starry skies
A mound of earth and a mass of flowers
Mark the spot where a maiden lies,
As happy once as the golden hours.

A little hillock of sacred earth
Rises above the loveliest girl
That ever beneath the stars had birth,
That ever was formed of musk and pearl.

A little hillock of earth, but, oh,
The mines of Nevada ne'er contained
A treasure so rich as lies below,
In her radiant beauty, all unstained.

A cross of roses is at her head,
And a harp stands at the feet of her,
And ribbons soiled with the tears were shed
Lie there in knots and hint of myrrh.

THE NEW-MADE GRAVE

Monument there is none to mark
The spot where the marble maiden lies,
But the vesper star in the over-dark
Shines straight down from the silent skies.

Oh, many a face has the world to show,
Many a lady in silk and furs;
But never a maid so sweet, I trow,
And never a face so fine as hers!

The world has many a prize to win,
Many a favor fair to bestow;
But gold and honors are vile as tin
To him whose treasure lies hid below.

The sun may shine, and the roses bloom,
And the white-winged ships sail o'er the sea;
The stars may gleam in the purple gloom,
But never again shall beam for me.

THE EXECUTION OF MARSHAL NEY

They led him forth from prison,
The bravest of the brave,
His hero hands in iron bands,
As if he were a slave.
A thousand men stood round him,
And glared on him with hate;
But none so proud in all that crowd
As he, the bold and great.

The noble lord of Moskwa,
Him of the lion heart,
The kingliest man of kingly men,
They led into the mart.
They led him to the market-place
Amid the mournful roll
Of muffled drums,— a prince in face,
A demi-god in soul.

There in the square the hero stood,
His hands behind him bound,
Straight and tall, and firm as a wall,
And glanced o'er the thousands round;
Gazed with an eye as fearless
On the haughty Bourbons there
As he used to gaze through the battle-blaze
And the battle's thunderous air.

Sublime as a god in combat,
Or a Hebrew bard of old,
He stood in the mass, a tower of brass,
And to bold looks flung as bold.
Yes, strong as the god of battle,
He stood in the eyes of all,
As oft he stood on the field of blood,
'Mid the scream of shell and ball.

Then a line was formed before him,
Of a score of musketeers,
And the Bourbon flag flew o'er him,
And the Bourbons gave three cheers;
But never he trembled in lip or limb,
And never an eyelid stirred,
As if he saw not the flaunted flag,
Nor the vulgar shouting heard.

"Soldiers of France," the captain
Of the guardsmen sternly said,
"When the wand I wave, fire at the knave,
And shoot the traitor dead!"
Then silence like a death-eclipse
O'ershadowed the market-place,
And wrapped the crowd as in a shroud,
And darkened the marshal's face.

Ney's full lips paled and quivered;
The cheeks turned white and red:
He heaved his breast with pain distressed,
But never a word he said.
Then, fixing those fierce eyes of his
Upon the captain's face,
He made him cower beneath their power,
And filled him with disgrace.

Now stepped a soldier forward,
One of the marshal's men,
Who fought with him at Hohenlinn
And at red Elchingen;
And, taking out a kerchief,
He made as if to bind
Within its fold those eyes so bold,
Of the lord of human-kind.

Then spake the grand old marshal,
And his face with anger blazed.
"Bind not these eyes," he fiercely said,
"For, coward, they have gazed
Into the guns of Jena
When they were lightning-lit;
And they have seen the bloody green
Of Friedland, thunder-split.

"And they have shone when Glory's sun
On bloody Bautzen blazed;
And they have glowed when Victory trode
On Lutzen battle-crazed;
And they have seen the lightnings flash
On Moskwa's crimson tide,
When France beneath her conquering lance
Lowered Russia's savage pride.

"Bind not these eyes, for they have gazed
On Death a thousand times,
And marked the troops of France advance
Into a dozen climes.
They've seen her battle-banner wave
Upon the Pyrenees,
And 'mid the foes on Russian snows
They've seen that standard freeze!

"Since I must die, then let me die
As I would in the fight;
Mine eyes unveiled, as our line assailed
And put the foe to flight.
Yea, let me die, as I have lived,
All fetterless and free;
And let me look on Death with eyes
That looked on Victory."

A murmur of approval ran
Throughout the swaying crowd;
And many a maid and many a man
Felt for the soldier proud,
Felt for the grand old marshal,
Who had fought the fights of France
Since he could hold a musket old
Or carry a pike or lance.

Then spake again the captain,
And his eyes were bright with ire,
"Make ready again, make ready, my men,
On the traitor there to fire!"
A hush as of death stole over
The crowd, and an icy chill;
And a man might hear the beating clear
Of his heart, it was so still.

And like a lion stood there
The hero calm and bold;
And he held his head as if he led
The Guard as he did of old:
Firm as a granite wall he stood,
And the people held their breath,
Till the captain's hand let fall the wand
That gave the sign for death.

Then twenty deadly rifles rang,
And twenty bullets sped,
And round in a ring the marshal spun,
And then on his face fell dead,
Shot through the heart by a musket ball,
Shot through the head and lung;
And the women moaned and the soldiers groaned
As the balls o'er the hero sung.

And thus he died, the people's pride,
The bravest of the brave,
Who fought on a hundred battlefields,
His fatherland to save.
Thus did the great colossus fall,
And with him Glory died;
While Freedom fled from the valley red
To her home on the mountain-side.

THE MEN OF THE MERRIMAC

(To Frederic Allison Tupper)

Out in the gray of the dawn they sailed,
The murky light of the dawn;
And their hearts for a moment never quailed,
Though the bravest men in the navy paled
As they sailed away that morn.
For the sailors knew that the gallant crew
Were going down to their doom;
To the mouth of hell, 'mid shot and shell,
To destruction fell with its iron yell,
And the boom of the bolts in the gloom:
To death, by the shell that fell, pell-mell,
And the cyclone's red simoom.

Out on the silent sea they went,
While the boldest held their breath;
Out in the gloom of the tomb, intent
In blocking up the armada pent
In the bay, or in meeting death.

Out in the spume, in the gloom of doom,
In the mystic morning light,
To the black abyss, 'neath the precipice,
To the gulf where the seething waters hiss
And foam into fury white
They went as men go forth to bliss
Or the banquet-table bright.

Onward, on to the strait they steamed,
'Neath the guns of Morro black;
Onward, on through the neck, till it seemed
That the Spanish soldiers slept and dreamed
In the track of the Merrimac.
On, 'neath the walls with their castled halls,
'Neath the frowning hills they crept,
Till the flash and crash, and plunge and plash
Of screaming shells that fell with a splash,
And thunder-light that around them leapt,
Informed the Yankees brave and brash
That the Dons no longer slept.

But on, through the hell of shot and shell,
Through the jaws of death they sailed;
'Mid the bombs that rose and fell with a yell
On the wind of fire and the whirlwind's swell
They plunged, and they never paled.

THE MEN OF THE MERRIMAC

On, through a pounding, bounding sea,
  In the thunder's teeth they steamed,
'Mid the blore and roar of the Krupps ashore,
And the guns on the hills and the castles hoar,
  That blazed and glowered and gleamed;
And the fire of the fleet in the bay before,
  And the bolts that behind them screamed.

On, while the lightning lit the hills,
  While a thousand rifles rang;
While the thunder-light from the forts and mills
Leaped down the rocks like roaring rills,
  And the balls round the heroes sang;
On through a furnace fierce of flame,
  Through the very gates of hell,
Through the fiery gale and the iron hail
That swept the decks o'er the heroes pale,
  And around like rockets fell,
The Yankees sailed, 'mid the whine and wail
  And the yell of the screaming shell.

Up to the narrow neck they steamed,
  In the face of the great Colon;
And they swung around in a fire that gleamed
From the Krupps and the dynamite guns that screamed,
  And a blaze that about them shone.

Round in the narrow neck they swung,
The Merrimac riddled o'er,
Till a Spanish mine in the boiling brine
Blew up, with a fury tigerine,
And a roar from the burning shore;
And the ship, with a rip on her water-line,
Rose up, and stood on her prore.

Then a thousand Spanish seamen yelled
And roared, and shrieked with glee,
As the ship went up, that they shot and shelled;
And the crew that till now their places held
Cut the raft and leaped in the sea,
Leaped out in the brine that was red as wine
From the light of the rain of lead
That swept the ship from stern to tip,
And ploughed the sea with a roar and a rip,
Till the churning waves were red,
And crashed with the clash of a thunder-clip
O'er the Yankee tars, half-dead.

For hours each man on the catamaran
On his face and hands lay down,
Through a storm of shot till the day began,
And the Spanish tars through the mist could scan
On the raft the seamen brown.

Then a boat put out with a ringing shout,
And the Admiral sat in the prore
With an air of command, and he raised his hand
And bade them fire no more on the band,
For the struggle now was o'er;
And he picked up the Yankee heroes grand,
And bore them back to the shore.

Thus the Merrimac in the narrow track
Of the bay was sunk that day;
And the Spanish fleet, by the Yankee Jack,
Was blocked, as well as the collier black
Could lock up and bar the way.
All honor, then, to the wonderful men
That so grand a deed could do,
That could sail through hell 'mid the cannon's yell,
And the storm of fire and the shower of shell
And of steel that around them flew;
Where the thunderbolts all around them fell,
And the tempest above them blew.

THE ELFIN'S SONG

Out of glimmer and gloss, out of shimmer and sheen,
Out of lustres that linger in light on the lawn,
Out of gossamer fine as the silvery screen
That the elves round the snowy white shoulders have drawn
Of their queen
On the green,
Are the vaporous visions of valley-land spun,
And the dreams of the dragon that sleeps in the sun.

From the fragrance the flower of the eglantine flings,
From the lilac, the lavender, lily and all,
From the gold-dust that falls from the butterfly's wings,
And the starlight that silvers the runlets that brawl,
Or that purl
With a whirl,

THE ELFIN'S SONG

Are the purple-bright phantasies woven that pass
O'er the soul of the sleeper like clouds in a glass.

And the song of the sirens that sing in the sea
We breathe on the sibylline spirit that sleeps,
And the fumes of the poppy that pales on the lea,
And the redolent odor the jessamine keeps
For the light
Of the night,
We inweave in a silken somniferous net
That enchants like the touch of a charmed amulet.

ALL, ALL IS VANITY

All, all is vanity!
The kings that built the Pyramids of Nile
Builded them solely to preserve their name;
But ere those kings were dead a little while,
Alike forgotten were their deeds and fame.
The old stone mountains that entomb their dust
Four thousand years have gazed across the sand;
But they that builded them are turned to rust,
Their names forgotten, and their titles grand.
All, all is vanity!

All, all is vanity!
The Grecian madman that would rule the world,
And fill mankind with wonder at his deeds,
Ere yet success his fevered brow impearled,
Died, unregretted, like his slaves and steeds.
His very tomb has perished like his name;
His empire vast has sunk beneath the wave,

And he who lived the very slave of fame
Lies like a slave in a forgotten grave.
All, all is vanity!

All, all is vanity!
The songs Erinna sung, where are they now?
Although she wrote that they might live for e'er.
Where are the laurel leaves that graced her brow?
The statues builded to her genius rare?
Alas! the rival of old Homer sleeps
Unknown, beside the loud resounding sea,
And not a single song Dame Fortune keeps
To make perpetual her memory.
All, all is vanity!

All, all is vanity!
A statue stands, the wonder of mankind,
Divine as music, pure as sunlit snow;
But he who wrought it, in oblivion blind
Sleeps like the roses of the long ago.
Apelles painted for eternity,
Whole years he labored on a single face;
But he has vanished from men's memory,
And of his work remains not e'en a trace.
All, all is vanity!

ALL, ALL IS VANITY

All, all is vanity!
For love the world was lost to Antony:
For love of that sleek tigress of the Nile,
Who dazzled all men by her brilliancy,
And made the world hang on her frown or smile.
For love of Helen, Paris lost his life
And brought destruction down on ancient Troy;
Yet was the woman worthless,— no man's wife,
But everybody's leman, trull, and toy.
All, all is vanity!

All, all is vanity!
The goals we strive for are not worth the strife.
Joy turns to ashes on our very lips:
Death is the sad solution of all life,
And glory suffers a severe eclipse.
The world is little when we view it well;
And we are little when we think aright:
Mere children flattered by a tinkling bell,
Or caught with baubles, and with tinsel bright.
All, all is vanity!

WAR

War at best is a brutal game, a thing of the pagan past,
When men were burned at the cruel stake, and to the tigers cast.
It served its end in the iron age, and, when that age was o'er,
It should have passed with the manners rude, the wild wolf and the boar.

In a civilization such as ours, a century such as this,
When man can signal across the world, and bridge the vast abyss,
When he can weigh the sun and stars, and measure the speed of light,
Rude war should have no more a place than the gladiator's fight.

Sober thought in a thinking age alone should have
the rule:
Fire and sword are the arguments and the reasons
of the fool:
What is our education, if it does not refine the
mind,
If it does not check the brute within, our raging
passions bind?

Why should the savage's thunder-drum be rolled
by men to-day:
Why should scholars and sages go forth their
fellows to slay:
Are we too weak of wit to compose existing
troubles between
Two states, without recourse to arms and the dyna-
mite-machine?

Call we ourselves true Christian men, true lovers
of Christ the Lord,
Ruthless men of the brand as we are, ruthless men
of the sword:
Is the law of love exemplified in actions rank with
hate,
Does revenge consist with Scripture, is it right to
retaliate?

WAR

Children of light we call ourselves, men of the book and pen;
But we act like children of darkness, savage, benighted men:
Tell me in what do we differ, who advocate bloody war,
From the cruel brute, who scarcely knows the cause he's fighting for?

War is but glorified murder,— yes, murder sublimed and raised,
To a noble art, and rewarded, emblazoned, and highly praised.
'Tis Butchery apotheosized, Lust set up as a god:
'Tis the primacy of power, the reign of the iron rod.

War means penury, suffering, destruction by fire and sword,
Horror, disease, disorder, the rule of the barbarous horde:
Death to thousands upon the field, and death to hundreds at home;
And all, that our standard we might raise on our foeman's proudest dome.

WAR

Fields of blood for a scrap of land, a rock or two
in the sea:
Fever and sorrow and suffering, that an empire
we might be!
Say, is it worth the lives are lost, is it worth the
blood is shed,
Is fame so dear it must be bought by an army of
the dead?

Ah, 'tis a brutal prize-fight, a nation's most terrible
curse:
With a country offered as a prize, a people as the
purse;
And the nations all should band themselves and
vote that war must cease,
And form a confederation in the interests of peace.

Peace has ever meant Progress, the national
wealth and weal;
But War is retrogressional, the putting back of
the wheel
Of culture, civilization, a hundred years or more,
A rude return to the order that prevailed in days
of yore.

And I long for the time when thunder-smoke no
more shall cloud the sun,
And the gospel of peace shall triumph o'er the
gospel of the gun:
When state-affairs shall be resolved by force of
voice or pen,
And a royal fellowship of love shall bind all fellow-
men.

MURIELLA

Darkness velvety, darkness deep,
Dusky deep as the wings of the night,
Floats in her hair, and loves to keep
Her reign in her eyes that beam with light;
Eyes so lovely, so full of splendor,
Eyes so sunny, so true and tender,
All that look in their deeps surrender
Heart and soul to their beauty bright.

Sunshine beautiful, sunshine sweet,
Soft and sweet as the glimmer and gleen
Of seraphim smiles when angels meet,
Gleams and glows in her gracious mien;
Sparkles and flashes, and burns and beams
In her soft brown eyes, and smiles and dreams
On her crimson cheeks, and glides and gleams,
From her fresh young lips to her brow serene.

MURIELLA

Music, luscious as ever the song
  Gurgled and bubbled from bobolink's throat,
Or unto the oriole doth belong,
  Ripples and glides in her every note;
Rises and falls in a cadence low,
Like the siren songs that the breezes blow
Down the dimpling, rimpling rillets that flow
  To the fens afar, from the rise remote.

Beauty fair as the gods confer
  Blushes and blooms in her truthful face,
Filling with music the heart of her,
  Rounding her lines into curves of grace.
Gentleness, fine as the gossamer
That the faintest, softest winds can stir,
Kindness sweet as the breath of myrrh,
  Makes her favored in every place.

Always cheery when days are dark,
  Always happy when skies are bright,
Surely, she has a heavenly lark
  Snugly hid in her heart, out of sight:
A beautiful lark, that swings and sings
Of love, and lilacs, and all sweet things,
And unto the little maiden brings
  Golden dreams of joy and delight.

A SERMON IN VERSE

O LIFE, how fair and false you are, how like a hiren bold
Who gives her sweetest smiles to him who has the most of gold:
You hold the cup of happiness unto the lips of all;
But ere the wretch can taste the wine, you dash it 'gainst the wall.

You give us wealth of flowers, but your whitest, brightest blooms
Your fairest, rarest roses are all gathered for the tombs:
You give us wealth of music, but your sweetest music ends
In the requiem and death-dirge that we chant above our friends!

A SERMON IN VERSE

You give us gold, but take away what gold can never buy,—
The life-blood of the maiden's heart, the live-light of her eye.
You give us royal purples in the sunset sky o'erhead,
But, ah! you do not give us what we need most,—daily bread.

You hold the star of hope out, but you lure, allure us on,
Till we wander in the quagmire, and the gleaming light is gone.
You bid us look unto the stars, those sea-shells on the shore
Of Heaven, but, when so we look, you cloud the heavens o'er!

You mingle with your choicest sweets the seeds of bitterness,
And with the hawk of sorrow chase the dove of happiness:
The very hour that sees a young and lovely maiden wed,
Beholds a fairer maiden in her casket lying dead.

A SERMON IN VERSE

You prate of love and friendship, but, when we
have made a friend,
You take that friend, far, far away to earth's re-
motest end.
Of right you blate and babble, but you lead us in
the wrong,
And though you plead for weaklings, yet you
battle for the strong.

There's not a rose that ever grew but got its
brilliant rud,
Its crimson and vermilion, from the stain of human
blood:
There's not a lily in the vale, a violet by the way,
But what is fed and nourished by the food of hu-
man clay.

O life, you wear a loo-mask to conceal your face
of sin,
A painted mask behind whose veil you mock at us
and grin:
Silk gloves you wear to hide the hair upon your
freckled hand,
Well used to wield the war-fork and the savage
battle-brand!

A SERMON IN VERSE

Let others sing in jewelled verse your thrushes and
your bowers,
Your bellulated lilies and your golden summer
showers.
To me your lilies whisper of the dear friends that
are dead,
And your sweetest warblers mind me of the voices
that have fled!

THE TORRENT

Over the precipice bounding
And plunging into the abyss,
'Mid caverns forever resounding
With waters that battle and hiss,
Like a thousand tiger-wolves leaping
On the terrified quarry below,
Roaring and rushing, and sweeping
Adown the rough mountain, I go.

Over the rocks rent in sunder
By the earthquake's terrible might,
I roll like an ocean of thunder,
Flashing like gold in the light:
Down to the river-gods calling,
And taking the ledge at a leap
I go splashing and blashing, and brawling,
And plunge in the underwood deep

THE TORRENT

Like to a Titan, a giant
In the pride of his strength and his youth,
I rush down the mountain defiant,
And mindless of mercy and ruth
Tear up the ash in his glory,
Snap birches and poplars in twain,
And, rooting up mountain oaks hoary,
Descend in a flood on the plain.

Sublime is the sight and the battle,
When the tempest matches his might
With mine, and the thunder-bolts rattle,
And the skies are blacker than night.
In vain he hurtles his lightning,
To humble my power and my pride:
I catch the bolts blazing and brightening,
And quench them in scorn in my tide.

Man's genius has conquered the ocean,
He walks on the waters at will;
But vainly to cope with my notion,
He puts forth his power and his skill.
His engines I crash and I shatter,
I snap like a twig all his chains:
His mills and his timbers I scatter,
And deluge his valleys and plains.

THE TORRENT

Over the precipice bounding,
And breaking in thunder below,
'Mid caverns forever resounding,
Like demons in terrible woe,
With fuming and foaming, and flashing,
As strong and resistless as Fate,
I go rushing, and dashing, and crashing,
Down deep in the gloom of hell-gate.

AN OFFERING TO JESUS

Flowers I would bring, the fairest and the whitest,
If flush of flowers and bloom of buds could please
Thy spirit most; or gems the best and brightest
That ever slumbered under silent seas;
Or silvern songs, the liquidest and lightest
E'er sung in sunlight upon level leas;
Or myrrh, or musk, or melrose, for thou slightest
Nor scornest, Lord, the slenderest of these.
Flowers I would bring, but I will bring a fairer,
A sweeter offering than blossoms bright,
Gems I would bring, but I will bring a rarer,
A richer gem than glitters in the night;
For, O Dear Lord, to-day I'll be the bearer
Of thoughts as pure and lovely as the light!

THE LAND OF SONG

In the summer night, when the wind is still
That fretted the flowers the whole day long,
And I hear the notes of the whip-poor-will
As he flits along the purple hill,
I love to enter the Land of Song.

I love to float on the sky of thought,
Like a cloud of pearl and amethyst,
Or like a flower by the breezes caught,—
A purple flower with perfume fraught,
And borne to a land of golden mist.

Oh, yes! I delight to leave the strife,
The sorry strife of a sordid world,
And steal away to a larger life,
With love and flowers and sunshine rife,—
Where the very ground is impearled.

Oh, the Land of Song is a land that lies
Beyond the verge of the vermeil west,

THE LAND OF SONG

Where the sunlit seas and the sunlit skies
Merge into a golden paradise
And isle of Elysian rest.

And sirens singing across the sea
To silver citherns and rebecs sweet
Call over the waves seductively,
And woo with the magic minstrelsy
To their shady sylvan seat.

And I enter the golden gate that bars
The land of song from the land of strife;
And I gaze in awe on the sea of stars,
And the champac flowers and camalatas,
That bloom in this brighter life.

And wandering on through the garden gay,
With its flowers the fairest ever seen,
Adown frescades where the fountains play,
And fall and flash in the sun-bright ray,
And fling their gems on the green,

I come to the silvery sands that sing,
The silver sands that sing in the sun,
When the zephyr flits on his silken wing
O'er the pebbles of pearl and makes them ring,
Till the day in the west is done.

And, sauntering on towards the hills of gold,
I come at last to the fountain bright,
Where Undines play with the mermen bold
In the blue pellucid waters cold,
Or sing on the ribible light.

And brilliant birds on brightest wing
Sail over the sweetly scented scene,
Or deeply hid among roses sing
Such songs as only a seraph's string
Can shake on the wind, I ween.

And out of the aisles and alleys green
Of the gloomy groves the sweetest strains
Float over the dells the fells between,
And fall on the flowers that glow and gleen,
As softly as golden rains.

Oh, it's silver song from the dappled dawn,
When the smiling sun like a lily lies
On the placid waves, till the morrow morn
Relumes the lake and the lilac lawn
In this wonderful paradise.

And it's always May in the Land of Song,
Where the brightest birds in the brightest bowers

Make love and music the whole day long,
And the dimbles, dells, and dingles throng
With the fairest, freshest flowers.

And, oh! the beauty, the bloom, the blush
Of those flossy flowers that bud and blow
On the banks and braes! No painter's brush
With the richest dyes can give the flush
Of the garlands there that glow.

For the brightest red is too pale a tint
For the musky roses that flourish there;
And blue is black to the hues that print
Their dyes on the lilacs light that glint
In the balsam-breathing air.

And vainly, vainly I pluck the blooms,
The golden-flowers and the hyacinth,
To plant below in my garden glooms;
But, ah! they fade with their faint perfumes,
The chamomile and the calaminth.

And vainly, vainly the silver sands
That sing and shine in the splendid sun,
I try to take in mine eager hands:
They melt like dews on the flowery bands,
When the garish day's begun.

And the songs,— the marvellous melodies,
That witch the sense till it swoons away,
The songs that float o'er the lawns and leas,
To reproduce on my lyre at ease,
Oh, all in vain I essay!

For the blooth and beauty that blushes there,
The dulcet notes and the glittering gems,
So delicate are, so fine and fair,
They fail to live in our grosser air,
And fade or wilt on the stems.

And whosoe'er in that magic land
Would fain its melodies take away,
Is like to him who with eager hand
Would grasp the light or the breezes bland
That flit o'er the garden gay.

Nor doth it avail the poet bright
When, earthward flown, he attunes the lute
To the songs he heard in the land of light;
For howsoever his fingers smite
And sweep the strings, they are mute.

Yes, vainly he sweeps the silver strings:
The music back to the birds has fled;
Yet, oft when the star to the sleeper brings
Sweet dreams, it flashes the light of its wings
On his sleep — and then is sped.

A CHRISTMAS CANZON

Oh, the Merry Christmas, merry as a lark,
A lark that is lilting up aloft:
Oh, the Merry Christmas,— bells are ringing, hark!
And happy boys and girls are singing soft.
Now's the time for laughter, now's the time for cheer,
Now's the time for music and for song:
Merry, Merry Christmas, best time of the year,
Sing, and dance the golden hours along!

Oh, the Merry Christmas! hang the holly up,
Hang it on the window and the wall:
Pass around the quinces, pass the kissing-cup,
And let the sweetest music rise and fall!
This the time for pleasure, this the time for song,
This the time for dancing and for cheer:
Merry, Merry Christmas, laugh the hours along,–
Christmas-time the sweetest of the year.

A CHRISTMAS CANZON

Oh, the Merry Christmas! stir the ruddy fire
  Light the cheerful candles in the room:
Foot it featly, lads and lasses, till you tire,—
  And let the Christmas roses gayly bloom.
For it's Merry Christmas, Christmas-tide again,
  Christmas-tide the brightest of the year;
And the song of angels, "Peace on earth to men,"
  We lightly sing, and give you all good cheer.

Oh, the Merry Christmas! let the jewelled tree
  Glance and glitter in the rosy light:
Let the happy children march around with glee,
  And clap their hands with gladness at the sight.
But amid the love-feast let us not forget,
  Let us not forget the Wondrous Child,
Little Infant Jesus, Mary's amoret,
  Lying in the manger, meek and mild.

Oh, the Merry Christmas! merry as a lark,
  A lark that is lilting up aloft:
Oh, the Merry Christmas,— bells are ringing, hark!
  And happy boys and girls are singing soft.
Now's the time for laughter, now's the time for cheer,
  Now's the time for music and for song:
Merry, Merry Christmas! best time of the year,
  Sing, and dance the golden hours along!

THE QUEEN OF SUMMER

On a windy April day, Elfin Elinor, the gay,
Walked abroad, and with the light of her eyes
Turned the morning breezes cold into aerated gold,
And with sunshine filled the fields and the skies;
Then the trilliums, thinking it lilac-time,
And the trailing arbutus bloomed,
And the columbine bells swung to in the dells,
And the violets the vale perfumed.

Oh, the amaryllis red lifted up her royal head,
And the mariet and primula pale,
And the foxglove glowed where the rivulet flowed,
And the orange lily lit up the dale;
For they thought that the light of Elinor's smile
Was the warm sunny light of May,
And they thought that the girl of the dark-brown curl
Was the Queen of the Florets gay.

THE QUEEN OF SUMMER

Now it happened that she sang, and the woods sweetly rang
With the syllabled gold of her voice;
And the bobolink heard, and the bright bluebird,
And the throstle, and they made rejoice.
For they thought her song was the song of Spring
That whistled for her birds and bees,
And the sweet lintwhite, and the greenlet light
Filled the woods with their melodies.

AESCHYLUS

Thy soul was grand as thine own mountains are,
  Grand as the crags of old Thermopylæ,
  The cliffs that frown on Marathon's blue sea,
And dark as he who drives the thunder-car
Along the mountain-ridges, rock and scar;
  And stormy with the Titan energy
  Of some dethroned, inferior deity,
Struggling to mount again into its star!

Thine eloquence is as the eloquence
  Of the black cloud-burst, and the hurricane,
Or the fire-mountain when it fiercely vents
  Its wrath in flames and lava on the plain;
And brilliant as the thunder-light intense
  That leaps and flashes through the driving rain!

INSPIRATION

INSPIRATION, what is it? The lustre that's thrown
On the mind from the splendor of Heaven:
It comes in a flash, in a flash it is flown,
As brilliant and swift as the levin.

Inspirations are comets that sweep o'er the sky,
Swift shooting-stars, falling while flaming,
That suddenly coming, as suddenly fly,
The speed of the vireo shaming.

They are songs heard at night in the lull of the breeze
From the stars in the firmament glistening;
Or songs of the sirens that sing in the seas
To the minstrel, the troubadour listening.

They are jewels that deep in the depth of the mine
For some gleam and glitter not ever;

INSPIRATION

While for others, and often less worthy, they shine,
A joy, and possession forever.

Inspiration oft comes like a dream of delight:
One cannot tell when the bright vision
Will beam like a star on his innermost sight
With glimpses of gardens Elysian.

Nor will it remain at the poet's behest,
Nor list to his honey-sweet wooing;
For shy as a dove it flies back to its nest
For all of his pleading and suing.

The bard, when the spark from above has inspired
His spirit, is passively driven
On the stream of his song, like a brigantine fired
By the flames from the thunder-cloud riven.

The sport of the tempest that seizes his soul,
On the breast of his stormy emotion,
He's swept with a fury that knows no control
Afar on the limitless ocean.

The bard is no more than the instrument fine
On which the white hands unbeholden
Of the genius of song play a music divine,
Like that of Apollo the golden.

INSPIRATION

He's but an Æolian harp in the breeze,
And cannot but choose him to render
The 'music that sweeps o'er the strings from the seas
In tones that are merry or tender.

THE BATTLE OF MANILA

Unto Dewey be the honor and the glory,
Who crushed the power Spain upon the sea.
And of noble Dewey sing the ringing story,
How he won the fight of all the century;
When his guns all spoke, and the line he broke
Of the Spaniards, as he battled in the thunder-smoke,
When his hurricane of steel made the great armada reel,
And sunk her 'mid the terrors of the thunder-peal;
When the whirlwind of death
With its fiery, fiery breath
Made the Don all the vengeance of the Yankee feel.

In the darkness of the night-time as a cover,
Dewey sailed into the mouth of Subig Bay.
And the heavens watching o'er him like a lover
Led him past the guns of old Malite gray;
Led him safely o'er the lines of the dynamite mines,

While the dreaming Spaniard slept by his old carbines,
Unconscious that his power would be shattered in an hour
By the terrible volcanoes that were soon to rain a shower —
A storm of fire and steel
To make their towers reel —
And to blast them as the blizzard blights the flower.

Past the islands, through the narrows and the channel,
While they slept, crept the tigers of the sea,
And came out into the bay beyond the cannel,
All prepared for fearful fight and victory.
Then the Spaniard woke as he saw the smoke,
And the Spanish battle-cry on the ships of battle broke;
And to the guns they sprang, while the startled city rang
With the rattle and the brattle, the clangor and the clang
Of the rising battle-blast,
As the rifles volleyed fast,
And the shells the epic song of iron battle sang.

THE BATTLE OF MANILA

Right before the frightened city lay the foeman,
And his battle-ships were laden down with death;
And his sailors, full as daring as the Roman,
Stood undaunted in the cannon's burning breath.
Then the mortars screamed, and the levins gleamed,
And in a trice the harbor like a hell-pit seemed,
While a thousand cheers arose from our fierce and frantic foes,
As they tried with Dewey's battle-ships to grapple and to close;
But a howling hurricane
Of steel and iron rain
From the Yankees sent them reeling 'neath the blows.

Now the Yankee men-of-war came on in column,
With Dewey and the flag-ship in the van;
Then there came a lull, an interval most solemn,
And all nerved up to battle stood each man.
Then came an awful roar, and the Spanish commodore
Tried to ram the great Olympia, and down upon her bore;
But the mighty Yankee guns threw their steel and lead in tons,

And well-nigh 'neath the waters 'whelmed the grandee and his sons,
Till the dragon-ships turned back
'Neath the awful thunder-crack,
Like mongrels that for fear from the royal lion runs.

Sweeping grandly past the enemy's flotilla,
Belching flame like volcanoes every one,
Marched the Yankees, flinging fire into Manila,
And hurling death and thunder on the Don.
Then the tempest stronger blew, and the bullets faster flew,
And the wild, cyclonic forces of the cannon louder grew;
While the seas and skies were red with the thunder-fires that sped,
With the battle-bolts and bursting bombs that hurtled overhead.
And again and yet again
With the shrieks of wounded men
The welkin rang, the furies sang above the dying and dead.

Two torpedoes now like hurricanes went tearing
Through the whirlpool wild of battle with a yell,

But a thousand howling bombs and mortars glaring
Struck the devil-ships and sent them into hell.
With their steam full on, marching past the Don,
Sailed the Yankee men-of-war while the fire of battle shone;
And each hero at the gun threw projectiles by the ton
In the Spanish fleet, but not a man the fearful fight would shun,
Though shattered were the ships
By our awful thunder-clips,
And though they knew they fought a fight that never could be won.

Now the flag-ship of the Spaniard, badly battered
And in flames, from the fearful fight withdrew;
And a second Spanish battle-ship, all shattered,
In the hurricane went down, with all her crew.
But, even while the junk 'neath the boiling waters sunk,
The Spaniards fought like demons with the wine of battle drunk,
And hurled their hate and lead at the victor Yankee's head,
Till the hulls blew up in ruin and conflagration red.

Yes, with their latest breath
They worked the guns of death,
And died, the bravest seamen that in battle ever bled.

While the battle in the burning bay was roaring,
And the earth was hid behind the red eclipse,
All the guns in Fort Cavite gray were pouring
Storms of steel upon the Yankee battle-ships.
But right through the hell of screaming shot and shell,
That swooped through the air with a most demonic yell,
Through the hot and burning blast swept the gunboats fast,
Till the Spanish cruisers sank, all fighting to the last;
And the air with fiery flecks
And the sea was filled with wrecks,
Like a harbor where a whirlwind or cyclone has passed.

Thus was fought upon the waters of Manila
Such a battle as was never fought before;
And the Spanish flag went down with the flotilla,
And the power of Spain went down, to rise no more.

Then sing a song of praise, for on that day of days
The ancient home of slavery was given to the blaze;
The tyrant's chain was broke by the burning battle-stroke,
And the slave arose, a free-made man, and spurned the iron yoke.
The new world to the old
Spake a message brave and bold,
That from her sleep of centuries the ancient one awoke.

LIFE

Say not that life is dreary,
A wilderness of wickedness and woe;
That the heart of man is weary,
As a spirit in the prison-house below.
For life, though sometimes tearful,
Yet mostly is as merry as a song:
A song of the throstle cheerful,
As he pipes all the summer morning long.

Say not that life is gloomy,
As a day in the misty month of rain,
That joy like the rose is bloomy
For a week, then lies withered on the plain.
Oh, no! there's an endless splendor
That is throned like a queen upon the hills;
And a music low and tender
In the rushing of the river and the rills.

LIFE

Lift up your eyes and gaze on
The glory of the sunset in the west,
While the crimson banners blaze on
The crennellated castle on the crest.
Is that not beauty golden,
Paradisal, like the loveliness above,
Where the saints and psalmists olden
Bask forever in the summer light of love?

Oh, list to the lilting veery,
As he whistles in the lavender there,
And say, is his song not cheery,
Is it not a charm to drive away care?
Is not the May worth knowing,
When the apple-blooms are pink upon the tree,
And the west winds sweet are blowing
And the rivulets run laughing to the sea?

Oh, say not life is bitter,
As the dregs and the leavings of the wine;
That beauty's but the glitter
Of a dewdrop glistening in the shine,
While the skies are bright above us,
And the roses in the south wind blow,
And the powers of Heaven love us,
And send us down their blessings here below.

LIFE

Oh, no! while children prattle
And romp around the garden in play,
While burbling brooklets brattle,
And the bells ring out a roundelay,
This life of ours is splendid,
As a sunrise dancing on the sea,
Or the rainbow gently bended,
Like a rose wreath for you and for me.

GIVE ME A DAY IN THE HILLS FAR AWAY

Give me a day in the hills far away,
When the mountain floods are foaming,
Where the caribou by the torrents blue
And the elk in herds are roaming;
Where the winds are strong as a thunder-song,
And the skies are clear as beryl,
And where all is life, vigor and strife,
Brattle, and battle, and peril.

Give me a sight of the Titan fight
Of the bull-moose loudly roaring,
As the thunder-headed buffaloes crash,
Buffing and butting and goring:
Or a shot at the tiger-eagle gray,
As he drops like lead from heaven,
On the fox that dies as if the skies
Had hurtled their bolt of levin.

GIVE ME A DAY IN THE HILLS

For I love the hills with their rushing rills,
The large free life of the forest:
The whistling breeze and the mountain seas,
And song of the wildwood chorist;
The chase of the deer through brake and brere
And the bell-mouthed beagle's baying,
The smell of the pines and the sight of the tines
Of the elk in the woodland straying.

And I long to fly from the narrow life
Of the townsfolk here around me,
From the musty airs and the petty cares
That harass, badger, and hound me;
I long to stand where the mountains grand
Are seamed in their savage faces,
And the hunter free, and florid of blee,
The deer through the greenwood chases.

ROSES IN THE SKY

The rose at your feet, love, is sweet, love, and neat, love;
But oh! I have seen a flower fairer by far:
The ruby you wear, love, is fair, love, I swear, love;
But I have seen gems that were like a red star!

The bird overhead, love, you bred, love, is red, love,
Is red as the rose is, and sweet to the ear;
But, O love, I know, love, where birds are that glow, love,
Like fire, and whose songs are delicious to hear!

For there in the west, love, where all is at rest, love,
And Heaven's blue lamel with stammel is shot,
Are roses of fire, love, and choir after choir, love,
Of redbirds that heard once are never forgot!

And rubies are there, love, so red and so rare, love,
That naught can compare, love, to jewels so rich;
And fire-opals fierce, love, whose gold-lightnings pierce, love,
The pink and the purple and womankind witch!

Ah, soon shall we meet, love, 'mid flowers so sweet, love;
Oh, soon shall our feet, love, the fire-roses press;
And soon shall the gold-light of God on the cold-light
Of men break, and show us His own loveliness!

THE SUICIDE

THERE in the meadow a lady lay,
Sleeping the terrible sleep of death,
As fine and dainty a piece of clay
As ever God had informed with breath:
A beautiful girl with dark brown hair,
A beautiful girl with dark brown eyes,
And features rare, and forehead as fair
As any cherub's in Paradise.

There by the road in the grasses deep,
Sweet with the breath of the fragrant thyme,
The young lady lay like one asleep,
A smile on her lips as if your chime,
Beverly bells, in her delicate ear
The silver song of a seraph seemed,
Or the accents clear of a mother dear,
Who bent o'er the girl that slept and dreamed.

THE SUICIDE

A beautiful maiden, scarce eighteen,
With lips that none but the pure might meet,
As round a throat as ever was seen,
Delicate hands and delicate feet.
There, in a garment as pure as light,
Beside a fallen maple she lay;
Her hand so white on the weapon bright
That blew her butterfly life away.

The birds sang up in the trees o'erhead,
The dragon-flies o'er the meadow flew;
The golden bees on the flowers fed,
And all was sunlight beneath the blue.
Ah me! how boisterous, brave, and bold
Was Life, that frolicked that summer day;
And, oh! how cold on the grassy mould
Lay Death in the sleep that lasts for aye.

Ah, why, when the world that morn in June
Put on her brightest and best attire,
And lightly danced to a merry tune
With forehead aglow and eyes afire;
Ah! why should she, the young and the fair,
When joy like light filled the earth and sky,
Know sorrow and care and black despair,
And steal away from the world to die?

THE SUICIDE

Aweary of life at eighteen years!
With a faultless form and a perfect face!
What was the cause of her bitter tears,
Love unreturned or fear of disgrace?
Was it hope deferred, or a broken trust,
Or sickness sapping her life away,
That gave this child to the must and dust?
Ah! God alone in the skies can say!

Censor, breathe not your poisonous breath
Over this girl with the angel face.
Here in the sacred presence of death,
Pity and grief alone should have place.
Peace, my brothers! she's somebody's girl:
Think of your own little child at home,
Pure as a pearl and gay as a merle;
But will she be so in days to come?

Peace, my brothers! perhaps even now
Motherly lips a kiss would impress
Upon the cheek and the marble brow
Of her who once was her happiness.
Perchance that mother, half-crazed with fear,
Calls on her darling over and o'er;
But, alas! her ear too dull to hear
Will waken to life and love no more.

THE SUICIDE

Close up her beautiful eyes of brown,
  Brush back her beautiful chestnut hair,
Smooth all the rumples out of her gown,
  And fold her hands on her bosom fair.
Poor little sufferer, let her sleep!
  Let her sleep, while we fervently pray
That He may keep, who loveth His sheep,
  Her sorrowful soul for aye and aye!

LILACS

The sunlight of heaven is smiling above,
And the air is delicious with lilacs:
The day is as rare as the rainbow of love.
O lilacs, sing ever of lilacs!

The oriole gleams like a gem in the sun,
And cheerily chirrups of lilacs:
The rills down the rocks to the riverside run,
And tinkle of love and of lilacs.

The bumble-bees over the serpelot sweet
Hover, and whisper of lilacs;
And the squirrels above in their leafy retreat
Chatter of redolent lilacs.

The children released from the school on the hill
Run into the fields for the lilacs;
And the miller stands there in the door of the mill,
And drinks in the fragrance of lilacs.

LILACS

Oh, never were sweeter flowers under the sun
  Than lilacs, delectable lilacs;
And, oh, when my life and my labor be done,
  Let me lie underneath the sweet lilacs.

VARIEL

Winds, blow soft over Variel's mound,
Winds blow gently and whisper low;
For the sweetest child in the whole wide round
Of the world lies here in her shroud of snow.
Blow gentle breezes, but softly stir,
Wake not the little one sleeping there,
Wake not the poor weary heart of her
Who once was as gay as the flower is fair!

Shine summer sun on her lowly grave;
Shine on her tomb, for she loved you so:
Loved you as sailor lads love the wave,
And basked for hours in your golden glow.
Shine out and warm her, she's cold and chill,
Warm with your breath her little white hands
That are folded fair on her breast so still,
Fingers inlocked with their golden bands!

VARIEL

Birds sing sweetly beside this tomb:
  Song-birds sing, but, oh, soft and low;
For a maid lies here that had once the bloom
  Of sunset-pink on a field of snow.
Whippoorwill whistle, and field-lark lilt,
  Oriole chirrup the May-time through;
For her heart was purer than sunlight spilt
  On a field of flowers impearled with dew!

Roses blossom on Variel's grave,
  For she was a Rose as red as you.
Lilacs over the lily-maid wave,
  For ye were the choice of her heart so true:
Beautiful mary-buds sweeten the air,
  For hers was as sweet as a life could be.
Jessamine mingle with marigold fair
  To murmur of one that was fairer than ye!

Oh, if ye knew what a gem lies here
  Hidden away in the earth below;
Oh, if ye knew what a melody rare
  Lies froze fore'er in her throat of snow!
But only one heart knows the worth of her,
  Only one soul knew her soul so sweet,—
Poor little Variel under the fir,
  A crown at her head and a cross at her feet!

St. Francis Xavier's College 1847 New York, N. Y.

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